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How Shall We Stop the Aggressors?

What will the United States and the other nations do to stop the international anarchy attacked in President Roosevelt's Chicago speech? Encouraged by that pronouncement, the League of Nations condemned Japan and asked for a conference of the signatories of the Nine Power Pacific Pact. The American State Department followed suit by stating that Japan had violated the treaty and indicating willingness to attend the conference. Japan let it be understood that nothing would deter her from her present course. The probability is that the conference will attempt to mediate, on the microscopic chance that Japan will be willing to accept this means to save her face. When mediation fails, nothing else of moment is likely to be done, since the experts know that economic sanctions cannot be effective without a naval blockade and the risk of war, the British navy is busy in the Mediterranean and the United States fleet cannot tackle the job alone. The incalculable factor in the situation is the President himself. He is probably influenced by the division of his political support on domestic issues, by worry about the economic situation and by the romantic idea that he can unite the country in a world crusade for peace. Unless his new foreign line proves to be more embarrassing than his domestic policy, he may commit the nation to adventure. But the present situation is that nobody knows what can possibly be done to implement the President's bold words. Action is almost sure to be more confused than they were, and to follow them at a very humble distance.

Mussolini Calls a Bluff

If anything could surpass the effrontery of Mussolini's note refusing to confer with Great Britain and France about the withdrawal of troops from Spain, it is the folly of the democratic powers' invitation to confer about the matter. Bring back my soldiers, tanks and airplanes? Il Duce asks in effect. Why, if you want to talk about that, the proper place is the Non-Intervention Committee, which I joined with a pledge not to send any help to Franco, and which in spite of my frequent boasts of the prowess of our arms in Spain, still does not recognize that Italians are there. The reply is in essence, though not in language, fittingly contemptuous of powers who keep on observing their part of an agreement which Mussolini has openly flouted, and who observe it on the basis of the pretense that he has not violated it, at the very time they are politely asking him to stop doing so. The whole affair is another instance of the futility of dealing with the new international aggressors by means of threats that you are not ready to carry out, threats that the aggressors know you are not ready to carry out. When the conference was asked for, it was informally understood that at last stern pressure was to be put on Mussolini to get out of the Spanish war. If he refused, at the very least, the French border would be thrown open for aid to the Loyalists. Now that Mussolini has rebuffed the invitation, France and Britain are debating again what, if anything, they will do about it. Il Duce knows well they will do nothing effective.

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The People Vote for Neutrality

The nation has been plunged once more into the question of foreign policy as a result of the speech President Roosevelt made at Chicago. The President has clearly implied that, for the present at least, he will not invoke the neutrality legislation passed by the last session of Congress. The American Institute of Public Opinion, directed by Dr. George Gallup, has just taken one of its accurate samplings of opinion in the United States on the following question: In which plan for keeping out of war do you have more faith—having Congress pass stricter neutrality laws, or leaving the job up to the President? Sixty-nine percent of the voters interviewed said they were in favor of stricter neutrality legislation. Of course, the poll was taken before the President's speech and it is entirely possible that a new vote would show a change of view. At the time of the sampling, however, it is plain that public opinion in the United States was overwhelmingly in favor of isolation as the best basis for peace. If the President persists in his present direction and fails to invoke the neutrality law, Congress in its next session may offer a great deal more opposition to his policy than he anticipates.

Wars in China and Spain

Despite the repeated announcements made by Japan's military leaders of a "big drive" to put an end to the long-drawn-out attack on Shanghai, the Chinese defenders of the city continued to stick fast to their positions. The Japanese advance continued in the North, meeting little opposition from Chinese troops, which, according to their announced strategy, will not make a determined stand until the invaders have reached the Yellow River. The Japanese publicize their progress in the North and minimize their lack of success around Shanghai, but they have inflicted no serious defeat on the Chinese armies.

From Spain have come more reports on the preparations for the big Fascist offensive that is supposed to take place some time within the next month or so, before winter sets in, although no one knows exactly where. Mussolini, it is announced, is pouring additional troops into Spain through Cadiz, and Marshal Pietro Badoglio has mapped out the Fascist campaign. Even so, it is doubtful that the Rebels can defeat the Loyalists either this fall or in the spring, unless the character of the war completely alters during the winter months.

Democratic Brazil

President Vargas of Brazil, who was hailed by President Roosevelt in his recent visit to South America as a co-author of the New Deal, is facing a presidential campaign, the elections being next January. Brazil has an excellent and democratic constitution. So far as Vargas is concerned, the best clause of this constitution is one that delegates dictatorial powers to the President whenever a state of war is proclaimed. Vargas has ruled Brazil under this clause during a large part of his incumbency. It is invoked whenever the popular movement shows signs of life, on the pretext that the opposition is really a plot of Communists who are about to spring into armed revolt. After all the fine words about democracy spoken in South America last winter, Vargas allowed the state of war to lapse and let out of prison some of his milder opponents. But the approach of a national election put democracy á la Brazil under too great a strain. Again Vargas, through his control of the legislative body, has clapped on the state of war and will have at the very least the inestimable advantages of a rigid press censorship and the power to put opponents in jail during the campaign. His rivals fear that he will go farther and abolish the election entirely. Meanwhile, the fascist Integralistas are allowed to grow without interference.

The ICC Under Fire

The Supreme Court is not the only reactionary tribunal in Washington. The article published in this issue, "Funny Business in the ICC," throws a startling light on some of the recent operations of that body and seems to suggest that changes in its personnel might be for the public good. The Commission, once a favorite of progressives, began to change in curious ways after it was given power over railroad finance. Partly, at least, through naïveté, it permitted some of the dubious or worse than dubious practices associated with the Coolidge era. The President has the power to correct this situation through carefully considered appointments as the terms of the various commissioners expire. The difficulties he faces are of course severe. It is hard to get men who understand the tricks of high finance, and have the courage to fight, even when that fighting means opposing members of the Commission's own finance staff. It takes bravery on the President's part to displace commissioners who mean well but are wholly inadequate for the regulation of the financial pirates with whom the Commission often has to deal. Names of possible new nominees sometimes come to the President in seeming innocence from sources that secretly represent special interests. The President has a difficult job; but as our article this week shows, it is one of great importance.

Forthrightness, Thy Name is Cone

Governor Cone of Florida is our hero of the week. Although Florida now has a rigid law against gambling, Governor Cone has announced firmly (if we can trust the daily press, and we always do) that he will not enforce this law against winter visitors to Palm Beach or Miami. These visitors want to gamble, says Governor Cone; all right, I'll let them. The Governor, we perceive, is a man who says what he thinks and then acts on it. The nation needs more men like that. Men who will get up in the middle of a dinner party and announce: "I'm having a dull time and shall now go home to bed." Men brave

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enough to go to a wedding and tell the mother of the bride: "Your daughter is not very pretty and you are awfully lucky to be rid of her." Men who can attend a dinner of The Friends of Escoffier and at its conclusion observe: "I think the food was terrible, and I'm going out now for a hamburger and onions." We wish we had such a person in our office right now; we should like him to deal with the visitors who call on us, assuming that we have never heard of the single tax, social credit or technocracy, and tell us and tell us and tell us.

News Notes of a Week

On the eve of the Atlantic City convention of the Committee for Industrial Organization, the break with the American Federation of Labor was more complete than at any previous time. The A. F. of L., in Denver, announced that it would continue its policy of duplicating CIO unions by efforts to organize white-collar workers and farm labor. John L. Lewis stated that he feels the break with the A. F. of L. is now complete. . . . Norman Smith, CIO organizer, was again severely beaten in Memphis, Tennessee, where both the mayor and the chief of police are giving tacit moral support to opponents of the CIO in their reign of terror. . . . Jeremiah Mahoney, Democratic candidate for Mayor of New York City, continued to harp on his single note, that Mayor LaGuardia is a "Red." . . . It was indicated in Washington that Congress will be called in special session about the middle of next month. . . . In France, the first half of the cantonal election, which is held on successive Sundays, forecast the continued power of the Popular Front with few changes. The French Social Party (de la Rocque's fascists) claimed ninety-two districts, while opponents credited it with fewer than half that number. . . . Continuing riots in Palestine showed serious tension, which the British attributed partly to Italian propaganda.

Forcible-Feeble Diplomacy

WHEN President Roosevelt made his eloquent speech at Chicago denouncing international aggressors, he used a language made familiar by Woodrow Wilson twenty years ago, and one which has been the stock-in-trade of adherents of the League of Nations, of "collective security," of the doctrine that "peace is indivisible" ever since. The speech of course gained poignancy from the fact that aggression is rampant and that war against women and children is being waged by bombing planes in China and Spain. But the philosophy behind it is the same. Treaties must be respected. All nations are threatened when any one of them is unjustly invaded. Even the United States is not safe from attack if international anarchy is unchecked. Neutrality and isolation offer no escape. Ninety percent of the people of the world are peaceably inclined; it is the wicked ten percent who cause the trouble. The peace-loving nations must take concerted action to stop the war-makers; the militarist nations must be "quarantined."

This is the exact opposite of the idea which gave rise to the neutrality legislation passed by Congress, which the President has declined to call into force in the present crisis. The philosophy behind the neutrality law is that threats against aggressors are unlikely to stop war, and greatly increase the danger of our involvement if it occurs. We may not be able to stay out in any case, but our chance of doing so is larger if we so limit our commercial relations with all belligerents as to minimize the incidents that cause trouble. Such measures may injure the victim of aggression as well as the aggressor, but at least they help to preserve an area of peace in the world. We shall have more chance of success in the attempt to stay out of war if we go about it correctly than in the more ambitious project of keeping the whole world at peace.

If Mr. Roosevelt means anything by his words, he means that he has abandoned the neutrality course laid out for him by Congress. The New Republic, which has supported this course from the beginning, believes he has made a dangerous and tragic choice. But if the United States is to follow the line that he seems to have chosen, it will be fatal to pursue it with anything less than whole-hearted vigor. Let us think back over the history of the past twenty years to see why this is so.

The Versailles Treaty, which ended the last war, was an expression of two contrary purposes. One was to punish and weaken the defeated nations, so that they would never be able to fight again, carving up Europe into a congeries of states which it was hoped would block any more imperialist ambitions on the part of the Central Powers. The other was to establish a regime of international justice and coöperation through the League of Nations, which would furnish a means for peaceful settlement of grievances, would effect disarmament, and also would bring the whole force of the world to bear upon any power or group of powers which failed to respect international order. It threatened aggressors with diplomatic, economic and, if necessary, military sanctions. To those who objected that the terms of the treaty were unjust, would cause profound economic dislocation, would breed new wars, it was replied that in due course the League would remedy all that. The League, of course, failed to make any substantial modification of the terms of the treaty, as those who opposed American par-

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ticipation in it feared would be the case. Disarmament was a fraud. Capitalist nationalism went ahead as usual, to cause disputes and economic disorders. New potential aggressors arose out of the turmoil, as realists all along had foreseen. The sole hope of the League, as a machinery for peace preservation, came to lie not in its ability to heal but in the menace of its threats.

Among the weaknesses of the idealistic pacifism which relied upon the League, the most fatal was the delusion that the mere threats of sanctions expressed in the League Covenant would make it unnecessary to apply them. You did not need to worry about the cost or effectiveness of economic embargoes, because no nation would be foolhardy enough to risk incurring them. Still more, if you threatened to use armies and navies as an "international police" you would never have war—that is, you would never need to use the armies and navies. Consequently you could be morally and physically unprepared to fight just because you had threatened to do so.

The trouble was that certain powers were shrewd enough, and reckless or desperate enough, to gamble on the hollowness of threats uttered by people who did not want to fight. Japan was the first to do so, when she seized Manchuria. The League duly condemned her aggression, but when the nations—and particularly Great Britain—actually had to count the cost of sanctions, economic or military, the job of stopping Japan seemed too quixotic. Germany challenged the League, first by rearmament, then by reoccupation of the Rhineland. The League Powers saw at once that they could not do anything to prevent Germany from accomplishing these things without a war, and for war neither the governments nor the peoples were prepared. Of course the Ethiopian affair is fresh in our minds. Mussolini, encouraged by the collapse of the League in other instances, went out frankly for conquest of a League member nation, and got away with it. The League, mustering all its resolution for a now-or-never attempt, did obtain the application of economic sanctions against Italy—but they did not cover enough products or materials, and were not vigorously enough applied, to stop her. When it came to denying her oil, or using warships to blockade her coasts, or keeping her transports from passing through the Suez Canal, nobody had the nerve to do it because these things could not be done without taking a very big risk that Mussolini would start a war in the Mediterranean—and that meant in all of Europe. Finally, the failure of the sanctions which sought to quarantine the Spanish war is a world scandal.

The inescapable lesson from all this is—when a nation is bent upon military aggression, there is no way to stop her save ability and readiness to defeat her by force of arms. There is a slight chance of preserving peace by "concerted action of peace-loving nations" if these nations can surely enforce their will and are known by the trouble-makers to be willing to do so. Otherwise all the talk of collective security is dangerous nonsense. Unless we are prepared to fight Japan, Italy and Germany before things get any worse and are willing convincingly to say so, we had much better adopt a firm policy of abstention in the first place. Tall talk about international morality has no effect when coupled with a declaration that we do not intend to go to war. It merely provides the agitation necessary to excite us to a fighting pitch after the damage is done and our potential enemies have gone too far to withdraw. We become convinced of our peaceable righteousness and of the wickedness of the aggressors. In the end we succumb to the argument that as devoted lovers of peace we must go to war to preserve it.

What sort of "quarantine" can Mr. Roosevelt have in mind as a means of causing Japan to cease in her attempt to conquer China? A refusal to sell arms, ammunition and implements of war would have no more effect on Japan than upon Italy, if as much. Japan is equipped to make all she needs of these things. She has bought airplanes from us, but only to the extent of $1,500,000 in the eighteen months preceding July, 1937. Japan is nearly self-sustaining in food; she cannot be starved out. She does, however, need raw materials for her industries; her principal imports consist of cotton, wool, iron ore, pig iron, scrap metal, copper and oil. A complete and effective embargo would cause serious injury to her economic life, and would eventually—though probably not for many months—diminish her ability to fight. It would also deprive our Southern states of about one-quarter of the foreign market for their cotton, and Australia of a large outlet for her wool. Meanwhile Japan would be compelled to push her conquests in Asia, perhaps extending them to the Dutch East Indies or possibly to British India, in order to obtain the cotton, oil and iron that Western nations denied her. Furthermore, such embargoes could not be enforced without naval operations and clashes with Japanese warships. We should be faced with precisely the same dilemma that bedeviled the League against Italy—either the sanctions would be so weak as to be ineffectual, or they would be so drastic as to involve us in war.

War against Japan carried on at long distance, principally by British and American navies, would be a futile and exhausting affair. And of course either the diversion of British naval resources to this arena or the participation of Soviet Russia would give Italy and Germany their long awaited chance in Europe.

There is little doubt that an alliance of the peace-loving powers could in the end defeat the new aggressors, after a long and bloody war. But there is a great deal of doubt that any policy of threats short of expression of a resolute intention to use extreme measures would give them pause at the present juncture. There is no use going in for collective security and then doing nothing about it except to give Japan a tap on the wrist, or lecturing Il Duce and Der Führer about humanity. In view of Mr. Roosevelt's resounding statements concern-

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ing domestic affairs, followed only by hesitant and superficial reform, we greatly fear that his ardent language in this case was not preceded by a careful estimate of the cost of doing what he recommends. We fear that it will be followed, in action, only by straddles and compromises that can get us nowhere except into trouble. There is no warrant for believing that international action to check Japanese imperialism will be any more effective than previous international action on the same model. After all, none of the peace-loving nations wants to fight or even to sacrifice trade. If we follow this lead, we shall bluster and work ourselves up into a state of hot indignation, until we find that we shall either have to stop bluffing or make good. And then the very world war that the President fears will be on.

There are just two chances of keeping this country at peace. One is to resolve firmly not to fight, whatever happens, and apply the measures necessary to implement that resolution. This means, at the least, invoking the present neutrality act. Congress, when it meets in special session, has the power to make this mandatory on the President, and should do so if he has not already accepted its will. In spite of Mr. Roosevelt's alarm, this country is in little danger of attack within its continental borders, and might well reserve its military power to repel such an unlikely assault. The other chance is to unite with France, Great Britain and the Soviet Union in a firm warning that further aggression anywhere will be resisted to the utmost, by force of arms. Such a warning is certainly not warranted by the temper of the American people, and is unlikely to be favored by the British. But it is the only expression of the policy of "concerted action" that amounts to more than deceptive and dangerous fog.

Progressives in Seattle

THE Washington Commonwealth Federation, leading progressive political coalition in the state of Washington, has lined up behind President Roosevelt in his fight against the anti-New Dealers. Its action is important because it forecasts the way in which many other liberal and progressive groups throughout the country may be expected to align themselves during the campaigns that will precede the 1938 elections. The Washington Commonwealth Federation is more than a powerful force in its local political scene; it is an example of the newly organized progressive-party groups in this country.

The Federation recently held its third annual convention, and laid plans for a campaign to wrest control of the Democratic Party in the state from the conservative group headed by Governor Clarence E. Martin and his associates, who have dominated Washington politics since 1933. The political power of the Federation grew last November, when many of the candidates it endorsed were victorious at the polls. Senators Schwellenbach and Bone, together with a majority of Washington's six Congressmen, appear friendly, although only Representative John M. Coffee, of the Tacoma district, is considered an enthusiastic Federation man. Lieutenant-Governor Victor A. Meyers, who hopes to win the governorship in 1940, Stanley F. Atwood, Superintendent of Public Instruction, twenty-three state representatives and a small bloc of state senators are all Federation men.

The 665 delegates to the convention, from twenty-five out of Washington's thirty-nine counties, reflected the types of organization that compose the bulk of the Federation's membership. They represented CIO unions (particularly lumber and the maritime workers), the metal trades and building-service unions of the A.F. of L., the Workers' Alliance, the Old Age Pension Union and Democratic office-holders and organization leaders. More than two-thirds of the delegates came from King County (which has about one-third of the state's population), a fact that emphasizes Seattle's dominant place in the Federation. The scarcity of representatives from eastern Washington, the agricultural region, showed that the farmers as a group are apathetic or hostile to the Federation's work.

In the seventy-two resolutions the convention adopted, Roosevelt and his program received emphatic endorsement, and the various actions the Washington state officials have taken to block the fulfilment of the administration program were condemned. The threat that the Federation offers to the present conservative Democratic leadership in Washington is more than sheer bluster. The bloc of twenty-three representatives in last winter's legislature was instrumental in forcing a favorable vote on a resolution approving Roosevelt's court-reform plan and defeated the Governor's bill of compulsory arbitration of labor disputes. It pushed through a bill setting $100 a month as the minimum wage for all state employees and helped keep in committee a bill requiring labor unions in the state to incorporate. The Federation was able to do these things last winter, when it had less political experience and smaller support. It should be able to accomplish even more in the fight ahead.

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Castilian Drama

An Army Is Born

A FEW WEEKS ago I left Spain with a steady and reasoned confidence in the future, particularly in the Republican Army. That quite unromantic confidence I have derived, not from the study of political pamphlets, but from work in the army and from contact with agrarian conditions close enough to approximate to personal experience. True, there were dissenting voices in Spain; the Madrid papers, CNT and Castilla Libre, were still qualifying the Negrin government as counter-revolutionary, and a few pamphlets were saying that the regular army was just another professional bourgeois army, which would not only be incapable of victory (for some mystical reason which did not include fascist artillery) but would ensure defeat. In the front line, however, the men who *were* the popular army remained unimpressed.

But here in New York, at a distance of several thousand miles from the front, I find that this sort of criticism is almost fashionable in certain circles. Despite the fact that nothing I have read of it is very convincing, I intend in these two articles to give a positive outline of the way in which events in Spain have gone.

Shoving aside the revolutionary mystic and getting down to the fundamental problem of Loyalist Spain, we have this to understand: how order came out of the collision and confusion of last fall. The coming of order and the manner in which the danger of a brittle overcrystallization was avoided is what I wish to describe. If I take the army as an example it is because I know it best.

In each department of national activity two fruitful principles of action can be seen at work. It is hard to make these principles clear and I can find no simile precise or vivid enough; but the first impulse is certainly Revolutionary Spontaneity, and the second can be called Governmental Regulation. It was the people that created the militias; it would be better said, converted themselves into militias. It was the political parties of the people which began the introduction of order and discipline into the militias. Emphatically the militias were not abolished by the government. The share of the government in this work of conversion gradually increased until, as at the present time, Valencia has become the real directive nerve center of the popular revolution and of the resistance to international fascism. In other words, the People's Army was built from below upward; it was not imposed by the government downward.

At the present time it is the people that determine the intrinsic character of the army, but the Ministry of National Defense that decides on which front, and how and when an offensive shall be undertaken. There were never any Loyalist offensives of more than tactical character under the Caballero ministry; but see how swiftly and surely the Negrin ministry learns from just one battle. The Brunete offensive of July was halted and partially driven back, not by the enemy infantry, but by German and Italian planes and artillery. The narrowness of the Brunete-Villanueva del Pardillo front allowed a formidable concentration of the enemy arms. Therefore, the next offensive must be on a broader front to prevent this. On the Aragon front of the September offensive, because of its breadth, this concentration never occurred. And when it merely threatened, the Cordova front was touched off, then suddenly Jaca was attacked, while a fascist drive at the old lines of my own brigade, the Jarama front, was easily held. This could not have been done with the old political militias, each responding to its own party's direction.

What were the defects of the militias of the Romantic Period? Certainly not lack of heroism or personal combativity. General Lister, in an October article in the organ of the Fifth Regiment, has pointed out one. It often happened that a senior commander, on suggesting to a body of troops that they take up a certain tactical position, was met with point-blank refusal. "You are wearing stars; even if you hadn't got them we should take no notice of you." This happened to Lister, whom no man could suspect of belonging to the old military caste and whose revolutionary zeal was beyond question. The political parties too often disposed of their troops according to imagined party necessity, or for reasons of prestige, or distrust of other parties. At the taking of Estrecho Quinto on the Aragon front, for instance, an FAI-CNT column, angry at having to take part in a preliminary operation of no spectacular success, cleared off to another sector with all its artillery. Later it was embittered because it had been refused a share in the glory.

It often happened that, say, a Socialist or a Communist regiment in extreme need of ammunition failed to obtain it from an overstocked corps on its flank and was driven back. This happened at Tardienta during the September, 1936, battles. On that same front, during the September skirmishes on the Sierra de Alcubierre, 2,000 liters of gasoline destined by the ministry in Barcelona for the British Medical Aid Hospital at Grañen were "requisitioned" by the chief of a rear-guard military committee who considered the consequent loss of life well covered by his self-chosen name of Pancho

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Villa. Or to take a recent example from the Aragon front, where the work of creating a regular army was retarded by the political problem of Barcelona, three days before the Twelfth International Brigade, under Lukacs, attacked Huesca in an attempt to help Bilbao, the POUM troops were playing football with the fascists in no man's land.

The militias possessed no organization, little discipline outside of small units, no cohesion and no central command. Nor were they trained; as soon as a group gathered together it flung itself into battle. In the first weeks, of course, they had to do this. The Non-Intervention Committee had seen to it that they should be half-armed, but even the arms they had were badly used. Innumerable times, to my knowledge, the militias tried to charge a blazing line of machine-gun nests, impossibly hoping to dodge a hissing death over 300 yards of open ground. Despite this heroism the Republic was heading toward defeat.

These are the charges in gross, the generalizations, which may be justly made against the militias. It is important to understand them from the inside of one of these units. First, let us not ignore the merits they had. In small battles against a localized foe the militias showed immense courage that sprang not only from private qualities but from unanimity of belief. The Anarchist felt he was assaulting just that white house on the gulleyed ridge for the dissolving away or smashing down of the scaffolds and props of the State; the Communist fought for the glorification of his party (observedly a powerful motive with Spanish Communists) and a society ordered, at least in part by the State, in the hands of reasonable men. (Why unified command of political units was difficult to achieve can be seen from this.)

But there were other defects inside the units. Excessive rank-and-filism, leading to rejection of reasonable commands, or such long discussion of them that decision was taken too late, impaired their efficiency. Often irreconcilable factions developed in the course of the debate. More subtly than this, the rank-and-filism of the militias often weakened confidence in the very principle of command, collective or personal. Military orders, even when given by a competent soldier, are never more than a statement about probability. Rarely is a strategic or tactical order so utterly right that success is obviously certain. Imagine yourself at the head of a ridge from which three gulleys descend (I am putting a concrete case). You have to decide by which gulley to go down into a valley of live oaks, among which a Moorish column is hidden. The floor of the valley is split by ravines and complicated by knolls and wooded slopes. Your problem is to gain the opposite ridge without giving battle, or with such decisive battle that the enemy is annihilated. There are reasons for and against the choice of any of the three gulleys. At best the decision is taken on the basis of probability. In the event your crossing is detected, you lose twenty-one men, and afterwards there is more confused debate, and the leadership or any possible leadership is blamed. Next day twenty to thirty men leave for Madrid, to join some other militia body or in some cases to protest and sulk in a party office. All through the months of August and September, the critical phase of the Romantic Period, the loose militias were thus weakened. Officers, criticized endlessly and often unconstructively by rank-and-file meetings, became exasperated and lost courage and enthusiasm. There were too frequent changes of officers as a result, and too little respect for them.

Political debates themselves, expressing divergent tendencies within one form of belief, often robbed the militia of unanimity. Worse, this atmosphere was one in which enemy agents could work with ease. It was not necessary to sabotage by cinematographic methods, no pouring of vitriol into cannon barrels or throwing a hand grenade into the munition trench. It sufficed to suggest that the Communist Party, at the instructions of Stalin, was plotting the counter-revolution to destroy, say, a Left Socialist column's trust in the splendid new battalions of the Fifth Regiment working on its flanks. I am not being hypothetical: when the time comes I shall describe cases of this, only with the charitable anonymity of fiction. Moreover, just as the morale could be raised to a furious combativity it often slumped because of a swerve in the collective psychology of this false democracy. On the material side, the romantic idea of the war led to a terrible waste of ammunition; at the period when controlled fire (which demands training, discipline and steady nerves) was objectively most necessary, it was almost unachievable.

We are getting near the problem, but I must make another demand on the reader's imagination. This chaos in the front line spread back to the rear guard (of course it existed intrinsically there also). Each battalion had its own Intendencia, or supply service, its own transport section, as well as its own general staff. This was a necessity in the early days, because the government was unable to provide it. The ministries—full of young ladies originally engaged because they were the nieces of a gentleman who had a friend in the King's Artillery, who had rarely worked more than three hours a day, for three days a week, at an unnecessary job—were not useful instruments of civil war against their own class. But this necessary self-sufficiency of the militias provided a channel whereby the confusion of the front reached back into the city, into the new and growing organisms, impairing their health. In those days war was not a clinic. To be concrete, the battalion commissars and quartermasters used political influence in Madrid to obtain what they needed. By packing a department with a staff of its own political faith, a party might switch the precious ammunition, machine guns, rifles, etc., toward its own column out there on the crackling Sierras. Or, at

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moments when the flurried front line was thirsty for gasoline, the political directors or factions with the most pull in transport parks were the best served. When this is a question of ambulances, fierce embitterment can result.

These were not the only evils arising from the intrinsic nature of the militia; there were secondary effects that at times became very grave. Because of the slowness in developing a neutral and uniform base service in such departments as the Intendencia, village producers were not infrequently harshly and stupidly treated. I have heard General Modesto recount how at Rascafrias, a tiny village in the Guadarrama hills, the quartermaster of a certain column announced that he was going to commandeer the whole of the livestock, about 110 beasts, many about to give calf. When the mayor protested that this would ruin the village economy for years to come, the quartermaster replied, *"Ca,* it is ruined enough already." And not always was the Ministry willing to honor as a valid claim to compensation a hastily scrawled piece of paper stamped with the name of some unregistered and uncontrolled company of militia.

Nothing is surprising about all this, but it is important to bear it in mind when young women of ingrowing political virginity and revolutionary book reviewers who never fired a shot in their lives lament to us in pseudo-dialectical speech the passing of the glorious July days. There was glory, and the men who shared in it are sharing it still in the army that grew out of the militias.

The Fifth Regiment

I am going to say without hesitation, despite possible charges of partisanship, that the People's Regular Army grew out of or crystallized around the Fifth Regiment, organized by the Communist Party of Spain. And I add at once that the Left Republicans and the Socialists took very little time to decide that in the methods of the Fifth Regiment lay the solution of the problem. Nor were there wanting Anarchists to approve, as I shall show.

Consider the various policies that might have been followed. The government might have been persuaded to impose the order and plan of a regular army by decree. What response would have resulted from thousands of Anarchists and Anarcho-Syndicalists whose philosophy disputed the very right of the State to exist? In effect, two "years" of conscripts were called to the colors during the latter days of July, with negligible response, principally because the men were already in the militias, but also because the machinery for dealing with conscripts did not exist. The popular nature of the Fifth Regiment and the immediate approval of the method can be seen from this, that while in July the Madrid authorities of the Communist Party decided that the regiment should be 1,000 strong, by the middle of October it had grown to 115,000. Before continuing this history I must point out that this enlisting in the Fifth Regiment obviously implied a popular enthusiasm more widespread than the membership of that political party, large as it soon became. It has been said that the growth of the Spanish Communist Party is due to the influx of the middle class seeking safety. Hardly a wise course, for that; during August and September and October of 1936, was tantamount to being ordered into the Fifth Regiment. And if I may trust the opinion of undertakers and underwriters, as well as my own senses, neither the splintered olive fields of Jarama nor the metal-shrieking heights of Brunete were places in which to seek safety in the hope of returning to the immoral pomp of a suburban grocery store. Perhaps, after all, a grocer may have ideas about freedom, democracy or even revolution.

Examine just one battalion of the Fifth. Barbers, though Generals Mozart and Rossini have praised their stratagems in graceful tune, do not often make their entry into history with a flourish of trumpets. There was a Batallon de los Figaros in the Fifth, recruited, not from the UGT nor the CNT as such, but from the collectivized establishments of Madrid, in which Anarchist, Socialist, Communist and Republican barbers worked side by side. In the Barbers' Battalion were 1,300 men of all parties, who fought together through the wild and bullet-bleak days of El Pardo. Examine the roll of the first Company of Steel, or the last battalions of the Fifth, and it is clear that the regiment was a Popular Front force.

So much for the political character of the Fifth. What of its organization? In the first place the units of the Fifth Regiment were not sent out to battle untrained. They were kept in the streets and parks of Madrid until they were in shape for battle. More important, they possessed uniformity of method and organization, so that two battalions placed side by side in the line dovetailed with ease. They were parts of a building set which could be rebuilt into an army when the time came. Their officers had precise rank and their orders received the backing of a disciplinary code which the volunteers accepted on enlistment. At the same time the political enthusiasm of the combatants was watched over and fostered by the political commissars. To one who has served in the Spanish Army, as I have, the charge that we have evolved a bourgeois army is a fantastic error, or worse.

The name commissar is, I think, a bad choice. There is no space here to explain the function of a political commissar, which is about 10-percent "political." We may call him a welfare and morale officer. The origin of the rank will explain the political side of the work. The first militias had collected around some party or non-party figure of courage and inspiration. At first he had been both impulsor or commissar and military commander; later, each function was found to carry enormous work and responsibility, and they were thus separated in the Fifth Regiment. They are thus separated throughout the army today, even when perhaps a majority

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of the combatants in a given unit are Syndicalists who have sometimes suspected the significance of the rank. How the popular will, expressed through its political parties, first created the army, which was then legalized and regulated by government decree can be seen from this: the commissars were working without government recognition until the month of October, when the Commissariat of War was created, with Alvarez del Vayo, a Socialist, at the head, and Pretel, another Socialist, as secretary. They still hold these posts, and in the Commissariat itself are Anarchists, Socialists, Republicans and men of all beliefs. For example, the commissar of the Twenty-fourth Spanish Battalion of my own brigade during the Jarama days was a Left Republican; the commissar of the First Battalion of the Hundred and First Brigade on our right was an Anarchist. There was *never* any difference of opinion which derived from doctrinal sources. The rankings of Divisional and Corps Commissars were not created until February, 1937, because in the previous October the corresponding units did not exist. From this I think it is clear that there was no inflexible plan of any army derived from the textbooks which the government imposed on the people.

As another illustration of the way our armed forces were gathered, take the example of the National Republican Guard. So far as origin is concerned, they derived from the old Civil Guards whose malignant character was well known to all save guidebook writers. Previous to the July rising Popular Front committees had worked within the Civil Guard in an effort to bring it over to the Republican cause. They were far from successful, yet an important number of Guards did remain faithful (if fighting shoulder to shoulder with the armed populace is being faithful). However, I think in September, the machinery of the Civil Guard was suddenly taken over by a committee headed by a Sergeant Major Vega, unauthorized by any decree, I fear, though they obtained offices in the basement of the Ministerio de Gobernación in Madrid. Four subcommittees were promptly organized—of Supplies, Recruiting and Purging of Ranks, Promotion and Organization. Testing them by action, one finds that of the first column of 2,000 to be put into the field there had been over 600 casualties by the second week in November. Later the National Republican Guard was legalized by decree, which like all other measures was finally ratified by the Cortes.

The Liquidation of the Fifth Regiment

The Fifth Regiment had been organized by a great popular party; nevertheless that party does not appear to have had any desire to maintain an army of its own (which technically and politically it had learned to do). From the middle of August until October, and later, the organ of the Fifth Regiment never ceased to conduct a powerful campaign for the regular army with a single command. Moreover, the commissars of the Fifth set themselves to the same work, both in public addresses and in barracks and trench. It was almost wholly as the result of this that on October 10, 1936, the government decreed the militarization of the militias. Two days later the First Mixed Brigade was formed from the battalions of the Fifth and other forces like the Carabineros, and placed under the command of Lister. With headquarters at Hortaleza barracks, this brigade was at once handed over to the Ministry of War.

At the inaugural ceremony of the First Mixed Brigade in the second week of October, Lister said that formerly, when each battalion of the Fifth had its own barracks, approximately a hundred bureaucrats had been required for each battalion of six to eight hundred men; whereas afterwards six or seven men were found sufficient for each battalion. It is easy to see how that hundred had been necessary. Each battalion had had need of an armory staff, shoemakers, supplies, transport, clerical and control staff, etc. For, remember, there were still no general headquarters and specialized service units with a fully developed administrative system. Again, during November, Lister stated that at one time 60,000 meal rations had been distributed daily in Madrid to military forces that had never seen the front.

Considering the results technically, the sector of front which a brigade of 2,500 to 3,000 men can hold, under *unified command,* becomes of more than tactical importance. And with the rapid formation of more brigades during October and November the government acquired a real strategic force, a *corps de manoeuvre,* for the first time. The Fifth Regiment leaders Campesino, Lister and Modesto had risen from company command, becoming acquainted with every grade of command as the units evolved.

But here again one phenomenon must be considered. The dissolution of the Fifth Regiment was *not* decreed by the government; all that happened was that the government demanded an end to the old heroic anarchy of the militias. The example set by the Fifth Regiment was rapidly imitated with real enthusiasm by the armed forces of other political parties. Did the heroism of the militias disappear with the anarchy? The tremendous days of November are the answer. December, January and February told the same story.

With brilliant realism, the Fifth Regiment did not disband all its machinery at once. As each brigade was handed over, its technical services and armaments were surrendered of course. Then the Regimental Strategic Division was abolished, then progressively other service departments; the social-welfare and organizational committees alone continued to function toward the end, until they also were dissolved in January. Finally, one month after the event, the Fifth Regiment was publicly declared liquidated at a meeting held, if I remember correctly, in the Goya Theatre. Approximately 125,000 men had been trained and placed at the disposal of

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the government (now containing representatives of all the Popular Front parties and organizations). Today there are no political units in the magnificent Center Army and a single command has been won. Yet that army is even more heroic than the militias and full of a flaring enthusiasm. The desperate struggle at the gates of Madrid, the lunging ferocity of the Loyalist counter-thrust at Jarama, the maneuvering power shown at Guadalajara are proof of this (or is it proof that the life had gone out of the Spanish Popular Revolution?). The extremist critics who do not even succeed in playing an air on their fiddles, but merely tune up while Rome burns, must answer.

For my part I see no reason why I should not trust my experience. I mean this quite literally; I do trust my own normal sensitivity, as every professional writer must. Once I had something of a certainty that I had understood the turbulence of Barcelona. What I mean is, that the city's quality touched me directly without intellectual or doctrinal interpretation. At any other time I felt that way about southern Spain and the olive fields. Indeed, to the untheoretic mind, there does not seem to be any other way of knowing so violent, strange and enigmatic a country. True, one's perception may be colored by hope and belief, but it would hardly misreport in such sustained and deep-going ways. I have written this paragraph three times in the effort to avoid rhetoric and simile. The truth is that during the last months of my service in the Spanish army I have on innumerable occasions been struck by what privately I call original astonishment, blank wonder at what I saw about me, in the change from the old anarchy to this cleanly machine. It has seemed to me that a great historic army is forming itself, an army that *is* a people. RALPH BATES.

This is the first of two articles on the Loyalist military forces. The second, to appear in an early issue, will describe the development of the unified command.—THE EDITORS.

Europe's Power Politics

WHEN STATESMEN meet on an illuminated stage they rarely settle anything by conversation. It often happens, however, that they meet because something has previously been settled. What happened, then, before the Duce and the Führer met? The main diplomatic events that preceded their meeting had been some puzzling approaches from London to Berlin and Rome singly; then came the surprising Nyon Conference. One watched these approaches without admiration, for they seemed at a first glance excessively simple-minded.

The British government, with rearmament progressing swiftly yet still far from completed, seemed to be worried because it had two well armed opponents. It tried, apparently, to break the Rome-Berlin axis by attempts to detach first Rome from Berlin, and then Berlin from Rome. Neither effort succeeded, and the failure of the "Gentleman's Agreement" between the Duce and Mr. Eden led to some show of annoyance. The Duce forgot the decencies when he sent so promptly so large an army to Spain. The Foreign Office is playing for a stalemate in the civil war, but a force of this magnitude was thought to promise a decisive victory for Franco. The approach to Berlin fared no better. The "axis" could not be broken, and round it more than ever the affairs of Europe revolved.

Mr. Neville Chamberlain, when he took command, seemed to return to the older and broader policy of reconciliation with both the Dictators, of which the natural outcome would be the fusion of the four Western Powers into a single group. He addressed to Hitler two public invitations to friendship, and wrote his personal letter to Mussolini. The customary reaction followed. Destroyers, submarines and airplanes, which everyone believes to be Italian, took to preying upon the commercial ships of every flag in the Mediterranean with unexampled audacity and inhumanity. This the euphemists of the Foreign Office called "piracy," though its motive was no more robbery than is that of the storm-troopers who beat up radicals in Hitler's concentration camps.

For a brief moment British behavior reverted to the traditional pattern. It was actually realized that the security of commerce on the high seas is one of the foundations of capitalist or, indeed, of any civilization, and for once, a conference, at Nyon, yielded prompt and practical results. The thing was done, however, without inflicting on Italy any mortal affront; even Mr. Litvinov was persuaded not to publish the evidence that implicated the Italians, and subsequently the arch-pirate was taken into partnership with the policemen.

Interpret it as one may, the scene after the outbreak of piracy and its apparent suppression (for all news dealing with this subject has vanished from the press) suggested a new-found harmony. To be sure, the Italians renewed the old threat to Egypt by increasing their garrison in neighboring Libya. But in Paris and Geneva they talked volubly and plausibly about "piracy," "volunteers" and Spain with the British and the French, while Berlin staged the Duce's visit. Were the Four Powers really coming together, or were the Italians merely playing with willing dupes following their familiar technique?

Unless one has telepathic access to the bosoms of

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two Dictators and two Premiers, the only way to answer this question is by an analysis of the objectives that the Four Powers pursue. Are they compatible, or can they by any conceivable rearrangement be rendered so?

British policy, to begin with, is that of a satisfied, even a gorged Power. It desires no change in the *status quo,* but manifestly it will run no risk to avoid any change that falls short of a deadly and obvious menace to the security of its own communications and possessions. The acquisition by Japan of North China would not be such a threat, nor yet would the establishment under Italo-German patronage of a fascist dictatorship in Spain. It would prefer stalemate and a compromise in which it might figure as mediator, but it is not yet alarmed by the distant prospect of an unqualified victory for Franco. It believes that this hero would somehow wriggle out of his obligations to Rome and Berlin, and it would assist him to do so at the appropriate moment by lending him money. What it could not endure, or believes that it could not endure, would be the permanent military control by Italy and Germany of the Balearic Islands and the Straits. Even over this it is easy-going, because it reckons that two years hence its own relative military power will be much better able to deal with a threat in the Mediterranean than it is today.

On this issue and on every other, therefore, it temporizes and looks for friendly arrangements, even if they are patently insincere. Opinion in the governing class is divided over Germany: some would head her off and permit her to expand in Central Europe or at Russia's expense; others (including the permanent chiefs of the Foreign Office) see in her the arch-enemy. Nothing is certain save that the Empire will fight (today or any day) to defend its own possessions and the opposite shores of the Channel, and tomorrow (but probably not today) to prevent the domination of the Mediterranean by Italy. For nothing else will it fight, though it views any brutality and nearly every change with varying degrees of distaste.

French policy under M. Delbos is, if possible, even more negative and timid. It flatters itself with the belief that somewhere, some day, it will draw a line against Fascist intervention in Spain by opening its frontier to arms and volunteers for the Republic. This line forever recedes. It has not implemented its alliance with Russia by military conversations. While it would view any attack on Czechoslovakia or any change to Germany's advantage in Austria with anger and alarm, one cannot be sure that without British military support it would dare to act. In sum, it follows British policy with astonishing patience, comforting itself with the belief that it will recover the prestige it is losing today when British rearmament is complete.

Turning to the Fascist Powers, one may doubt whether the pursuit of their "ideological" crusade against "Bolshevism" is with either of them a primary motive. For one thing nothing deserving the name of "Bolshevism" survives anywhere in the world today; certainly there is none in Spain. This cry of saving civilization is none the less useful, for it arouses passion at home and some degree of sympathy abroad. One presumes, however, that Rome and Berlin have aims more realistic and more self-regarding, for fascism is ultra-nationalistic and can aim at no good beyond its own borders. Hitler's purpose is no secret, he has blurted it out: he bombed Guernica to get iron ore. In other words, Spain is capable of becoming an economic dependency very much more valuable than all the colonies lost in 1918. In the second place, this peninsula has an inestimable strategic value, since it forms one frontier of France and commands both the Mediterranean route and the British Atlantic road to the East.

The same economic motive appeals in a lesser degree to Italy, but for her the strategic aim is even more attractive. Provided the "axis" holds, the two Powers need not clash in Spain, though Italy, after her heavier sacrifices, will doubtless count in the event of victory on the richer prize. One supposes, indeed, that Germany is little more than her "brilliant second" in the design that contemporary Italians cherish of turning the Mediterranean into what they call *mare nostrum.* If that could be securely done, the resuscitated Roman Empire would become more than a rhetorical figure. Given command of its waters, the states upon its shores would inevitably move, with more or less resignation, within the orbit of Italy—save only France, and she would cling motionless to England. Jugoslavia, or rather its precariously poised government, does so already, though its people still see in Italy the hereditary enemy.

What, if Germany should support Italy in this perilous long-range design, would Hitler expect as his *quid pro quo?* Some share, doubtless, in the loot of Spain, but mainly a recognition that his sphere of influence is Central Europe. To command it in the military sense and exploit it as an economic colony was the central war aim of the Kaiser's Germany: the Reichswehr still cherishes this idea and is opposed to the Führer's designs upon Russia. The only real difficulty in its execution is to swing Czechoslovakia and Austria into the German orbit. Neither, however, can stand alone. The problem is, then, at the cost of some loss of authority and some distant risk to the South Tyrol, to induce Mussolini to withdraw his support from his satrap Dr. Schuschnigg. That obstinate man would either have to go, or at least consent to the entry of active Nazis into his Cabinet. Prestige and the genuine call of race would do the rest. The Czechs, if once they finally lost their dwindling confidence in French and Russian support, would bow to the inevitable, for the Little Entente has crumbled already. The main purposes that the saner politicians of the Third Reich and its soldiers have in view might thus be obtained without crude threats, *coups d'état,* or even movements of troops.

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Gradually and subtly, by economic penetration, military assimilation and political propaganda, Central Europe from the Alps to the Black Sea would become a German sphere of interest. In the fullness of time the outward, legal appearance could be altered to correspond with the reality. Two empires, the Roman and the German, would divide all the middle and southern region of Europe. Provided always that Franco can be helped to a final victory, Mussolini holds the keys. If he will give Austria to Hitler, the thing is done. Vienna and Madrid are the crucial positions. The former was lost when the Social Democrats went under: the latter still holds out.

If these be the designs that the Dictators cherish under cover of their crusade against "Bolshevism," it is obvious that they are working within a fairly brief time limit. British policy, since the Labor Party has no chance of coming to power in any period that concerns us here, will always be conservative, self-regarding and indisposed to risk anything for disinterested political ends. It will always be slow to involve itself in anything resembling an "ideological" conflict. Even if the moves of power politics should compel it to treat Germany or Italy as its enemies or rivals, it will wish to act with self-restraint, lest it should, by weakening a Fascist government, give the Left its chance in these countries to win its way to power by revolution.

But as British rearmament nears completion, there will be in London less patience under rebuffs, less tolerance of manifest ill faith and a growing firmness in defending British interests, alike in the Mediterranean and the Far East. To this gradual return of self-confidence in British behavior, the mood of the French will respond, and they also will be firmer in supporting their interests and their friends. Plainly then, if Rome and Berlin know how to read the political weather chart of the British Isles, they will not delay unduly in establishing themselves firmly in Spain and in Central Europe. They may, indeed, have waited too long, for it is even now conceivable (this observer would not go beyond that very cautious word) that the two Western Powers will not tolerate the dispatch of another large Italian force to Spain, though even in that event they would probably confine themselves to inadequate countermeasures. They still talk, as they have talked for nine months, about the desirability of withdrawing non-Spanish combatants from Spain. Again, it is conceivable (the word is generous) that they may one day mean what they say.

If this be a correct reading of the motives and calculations that inspire these four Powers, the Western Pact is likely to remain a mere project. It may be the distant solution toward which British policy would like to work. It implies a certain contraction of interest in the affairs of Eastern Europe. Some interpret its inner meaning as a tacit permission to Germany to expand eastwards, preferably at Russia's expense. Since conservative opinion is resolved not to sacrifice the least of the mandated colonies that it acquired in the War, it may be a convenience that it can point to the Soviet ram in the thicket. For my own part, I think this interpretation rather too malicious: the Foreign Office is too cautious to further a major war even against a Power toward which it affects no feeling of good will.

The graver obstacle, however, is Italy's imperial ambition in the Mediterranean basin. If by a series of swift strokes within the next few weeks Italy and Germany could achieve their main ends, the British Empire, surprised and outmaneuvered, might perhaps acquiesce. But it is in no mood to give its cordial permission in advance, nor will it acquiesce if Italy requires more than a few months to make herself impregnable in Spain.

London. H.-N. BRAILSFORD.

TWO POEMS

Her Voice That Day

Now God be praised for light
Aslant on evening boughs
And God be praised, my mother sang,
For jonquil's gold and hawthorn's white
For cedar-wood and sunlit shelves
For spices and black tea.

And God, she sang, be praised as well
For your father's hands and eyes
And for my hair that pleased those eyes
When first they looked on me!

For eager pups and glistening
Buds, for kittens, calves and colts;
For laughter moonlight brooks and elves,
For dells and dancing too,
Oh praised be God! she blithely sang;
And praised, my son, for you.

December Night

Now, by traceries made pensive,
The muted menace of leaves, of
Stars shiveringly fleet and stars glittering,
Suddenly frost become

And the moon
far-thatched with cloud
Is a cold and willowed sleep.

Close eyes, my dear;
Our sleep is warm and
Our sleep is whiter than
(See, flaking the dazzled pane?)
Snow;
whiter than snow's slow white.

JAMES DALY.

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Funny Business in the ICC

A TRIP the tourist agencies have not planned is along the route of America's financial wreckage. It is an easy itinerary to prepare. First, in the southern half of New England, on the New Haven Railroad, whose bankruptcy fooled even the hard-bitten savings banks and shrewd investors of that area. Then, to winter vacation land, from Richmond to Miami, on the Seaboard Airline Railway, sunk in a financial morass deeper than Florida swamps. Northwestward from Florida, on the chronically insolvent Frisco line, to St. Louis, and thence southwestward on that railroad to Oklahoma and Texas. North again, on the Cotton Belt, from Texas to St. Louis, and then east to Buffalo on the Wabash and west to Chicago on the Chicago and Eastern Illinois. So far, our traveler has been able to see America from the Atlantic to the Mississippi while riding railroads in receivership. As he turns to the network to the west of Chicago, he sees almost every second or third line the ward of a bankruptcy court—the Great Western, which runs to the Twin Cities, Des Moines and Kansas City; the Northwestern to Nebraska and Wyoming; the Milwaukee to Puget Sound; the Rock Island to Tennessee, Texas and Colorado. The Rock Island would bring him back to St. Louis, the second major hub of insolvent rail lines—lines to the south, the southwest and the west, including the biggest bankrupt system of them all, the Missouri Pacific.

Now has come the time when the financial community and the government are trying to reorganize these railroads, and the new first chapter in this ever old, ever new history is being devoted by the reorganizers to the Missouri Pacific. To build a better future for this corporation, its board of directors selected two skilled operators in this branch of high finance, an accountant named William Wyer and a lawyer named Ernest Ballard. Wyer's office is in Cleveland, hundreds of miles east of the easternmost rail of the Missouri Pacific, and Ballard's is in Chicago, hundreds of miles north of its northernmost point. The reason for these selections is that the railroad is really the mouthpiece for the Van Sweringen holding company, which controls the Missouri Pacific, and has controlled it since 1929 or 1930. The holding company, directing a string of railroads from Cleveland, put Wyer in as treasurer of the Missouri Pacific. His serviceability was promptly demonstrated by the way he kept its books of account. With respect to one of the biggest manipulations into which the railroad was drawn by the holding company, the bookkeeping was for several years both successful and, so J. B. Eastman of the Interstate Commerce Commission described it, false. Wyer was told by J. W. Barriger, head of the railroad department of the government agency which lent $17,000,000 to the Missouri Pacific on false financial statements, that it was "crooked bookkeeping." Barriger's superiors in the government referred the matter to the Department of Justice, only to learn that enough time had elapsed between the commission and discovery of the transaction to bar criminal prosecution.

Wyer and Ballard have just been asking the Commission to approve a reorganization of the Missouri Pacific, throwing control of that 13,000-mile system back into the hands of the holding company. Its control of the road in the past, according to disclosures in the railroad investigation, has been marked by manipulation, speculation, unloading of properties at excessive figures, falsification of the books, and concealment and fraud in dealing with the government. A group of independent bondholders headed by Professor Charles A. Beard conducted a campaign of several years to have lawsuits brought against the holding company and some of the directors it put in charge of the road, for losses to which they subjected the Missouri Pacific. Finally lawsuits have been instituted, for millions of dollars of damages. Wyer and Ballard have asked the Commission to approve a plan which will turn those lawsuits over to the holding company's control—in other words, to let the defendants decide how they shall be sued, and indeed whether the lawsuits shall go on or be dropped.

Wyer spent a good deal of time in New York lining up various Wall Street bondholders' committees and banks in support of his plan. Some of them said that they could not go quite so far as to advocate his proposition, but they assured him they would do the next best thing and tell the Commission that they were ready to accept Wyer's program. Their reason, they said, was that this would save money and time. It would save both for the committeemen and their lawyers, who would thereby be enabled more quickly to rush up to the post-reorganization pie-counter and get the reward for the service they rendered. So well did Wyer do that the Missouri Pacific directors voted him a special resolution of thanks.

Wyer and Ballard were now all set to take the next hurdle. Their plan had to be discussed in public before the Interstate Commerce Commission, which would then decide whether it was good for investors and safe for the public. Ordinarily, investors and the public are given full opportunity and adequate time to familiarize themselves with a proposed reorganization; ordinarily weeks and months intervene between the time all investors are apprised of a reorganization plan and the time the Commission

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closes the public hearings relating to the plan. But for some strange reason, in this case, the Commission, which had conducted prolonged hearings on earlier plans, announced that it wanted to call a meeting and bring it to an end on the day on which it was opened. After a few hours of discussion, it wanted to shut the door, turn the key in the lock and keep the public out.

This unprecedented announcement by the Commission provided a remarkable opportunity for any reorganizer who wanted to use it for his own ends. The Missouri Pacific reorganizers played possum. They showed their reorganization plan to the insiders, who would throw their support to it. But anybody who might be hostile was kept in the dark. Two weeks before the public hearing at which everything was to be rushed through in the course of a few hours, announcement was made of what the plan, in general, proposed. But when the Beard committee, the only hostile committee, the only group which had not been lined up in advance, tried to get a copy of the reorganization document, to see what might be hidden, Beard found himself up against it. Finally, after circling the globe of the financial district, Beard's committee found someone who had a copy of the Wyer plan and did not know that it must not be shown to any hostile group; Beard's committee got hold of this copy, but after a few hours it was recalled. Beard had seen enough to discover what was going on.

When the day for the harmony meeting at the Commission arrived, Wyer and Ballard were there, with all the committees and banks and lawyers tagging along—the same old sixteen-cylinder, streamlined, plush-covered Wall Street groups that had always succeeded in putting through unsuccessful reorganizations which always have to be done over again by them a few years later. It looked like a pushover. But Professor Beard and his fellow committee members, Matthew Josephson of "Robber Baron" fame and an officer of a labor-union bank, had been on the heels of Wyer and Ballard for a long time, and sent a lawyer to the meeting. Beard's committee objected to the Wyer-Ballard holding-company-Wall-Street-banker-and-committeeplan. Beard sent the Commission his objections in print, to make it easy for the commissioners to know what kind of raid they were being asked to sanction. Beard said that to turn the lawsuits over to the defendants was equivalent to a gift of millions to the holding company. He said that to turn control of the whole Missouri Pacific over to the holding company was to invite disaster for investors who had already been done in by that company.

When Beard's lawyer arose in the well filled assembly hall at the well upholstered Commission building on Constitution Avenue, he did a very disconcerting thing. He offered to prove the looting of Missouri Pacific by the holding company, and Wyer's conduct on the bookkeeping end. The lawyer offered to prove the danger of letting this corporation get its claws into the railroad property again. He told the Commission the evidence he had. He wanted to take the evidence collected and published by the Senate Railroad Committee, and place it before the Commission, where the commissioners could not avoid seeing it.

Instantly the room was filled with highly polished, decorous but insistent objections. The Beard committee, all the other committees protested, was not a party to the proceeding. It had no right to offer testimony. It was an outsider trying to crash the gate. All the insider committees were parties to the proceeding. They had gone through a technical procedure called intervention, asking the Commission to let them become parties, interveners. The Commission let them. But it turned out that the Beard committee had gone through the same procedure, and had asked the Commission to make their committee a party also. This was way back at the beginning of 1936, eighteen months earlier. And the Commission had not done a thing about it.

Now, at the rush meeting in September, 1937, the Beard group asked the Commission to act on that long neglected petition. Beard's committee said: We want to know what is going on, we want to be told of the holding company's plans, we want to be allowed to object and offer testimony, we want to be on an equality with all these insiders; we will have all these rights they have, if you let our committee intervene. As a matter of fact, on that very same day in September, a number of the other committees asked for what the Beard committee had asked a year and a half before, and the Commission granted their requests instanter. But the Commission hemmed and hawed about the Beard committee.

Thereupon Beard printed another paper for the commissioners to read. He reminded them that they had let a dummy committee, representing Wyer and the holding company and the old Missouri Pacific board, intervene. He asked why his committee was worse than this dummy committee, and all the other broken-down dray horses parading as protective committees for investors, and successful in joining the party as "parties." He asked where these other committees had stood when his own group was battling for the institution of lawsuits. He told the Commission that the other committees had been counseling delay; don't sue our friends, mister. He asked where the other committees had been when his own committee was fighting, and fighting successfully, to get a congressional investigation of the holding company which controlled Missouri Pacific but which was, because of holes in the law, invisible to the Commission officially.

Representatives of the Commission thereupon went into a huddle, and came out of it with an idea. They turned the Beard committee down. They were willing to let one or two members of that group intervene as individuals, but as a committee, never. The Beard group refused to have anything to do with this mumbo-jumbo, and pressed their claim for admittance on a basis of equality with Wyer, Ballard and their financial cohorts.

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Professor Beard also asked some embarrassing questions. He told the Commission that if his committee was not permitted to offer evidence, no one else would offer for the Commission's official knowledge the evidence collected by the Senate. Then Beard said: why is the Commission unwilling to have the searching evidence unearthed by the Senate committee, and entirely willing to take the testimony offered by Ballard, the testimony of Wyer?

At this juncture, an enterprising reporter of The New York Times got wind of the fact that the board of directors of Missouri Pacific, and the lawyer Ballard, had refused to let the Senate investigating committee see his records, his papers, his files, on the subject of Missouri Pacific reorganization. The Beard committee read The Times, and Beard printed another petition for the commissioners. Beard asked what the holding company was trying to conceal. He asked the Commission if it thought it safe to vote a ticket when the candidates had put their records in hiding. He asked whether it is wise to turn several hundred millions of railroad property over to a holding company which is obstructing the Senate Railroad Committee and concealing the plans and documents its agents' lawyer has in his possession.

Our traveler who is making the circuit of the bankrupt railroads of the country might well ponder the moral of this tale. Here is the 1937 reorganization model, manufactured under a reform statute that was one of the final contributions of the Hoover regime to prosperity. Beard exposed the fact that things had been slipped into the law which made it in some fundamental respects an engine of reaction. Later, in the present administration, attempts were made to correct the bad and save the good of the statute, but it was just trying to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. However, everybody agreed that Hoover had made one great contribution to this law: he had put railroad reorganization in the hands of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and now the people would have a tribune, a sentry, a watcher of its rights, its savior against oppressors.

Do the results in the first big case square with these expectations? Under the Commission's guardianship, a holding company acts on the opinion that it is perfectly safe to use a reorganizer with Wyer's record, to issue a plan such as it has framed for the Missouri Pacific, to get the support of insiders' committees, to oppose the request of the only independent committee that it be put on an equality with insiders as to information and as to the right to offer evidence. The net upshot is that the people's tribune, the Interstate Commerce Commission, slams the door in the face of the independent committee, and the reorganizing directors slam the door in the face of the investigating Senate committee.

Washington. T. R. B.

The Russian Purge, Seen from Below

The author of the following article is an American who lives and works in Soviet Russia.—THE EDITORS.

THE Chelyabinsk Tractor Plant was put into operation toward the end of the First Five Year Plan. The plant, with all its equipment, and the surrounding city of modern houses were all designed and built according to the most up-to-date American technique and are therefore typical of the newer Soviet heavy-industry projects. The workers and technical personnel who turn out the giant caterpillar tractors hail from the most varied places. About 60 percent are local plowboys and milkmaids who learned their trades in Chelyabinsk and grew up with the plant. Some 20 percent are highly skilled workers and engineers sent from the older machine-building plants in the south. The remaining 20 percent is made up of a smattering of foreigners, and of workers who have drifted in from the far corners of the USSR. The personnel of the plant, like the plant itself, is typical of the new industrial enterprises of the Soviet Union.

During the last two years there have been several accidents, cases of anti-Soviet slogans chalked on walls and similar evidences of subversive activity. Following the Moscow trials there were a good many local arrests, and several "shake-ups" in various departments of the plant. In addition, several local "Trotskyite" leaders were arrested.

My circle of acquaintance in the tractor plant comprises about 200 men and women, not counting foreigners. The group is, more or less, a typical cross-section of the plant's workers and an average group of Soviet industrial workers as well. If these 200 are taken as the basis of an analysis of the reactions of the industrial population of the USSR to the Moscow trials and executions and to the subsequent local arrests during the past couple of years, the results, statistically, should be fairly accurate.

The occupations of the whole group of 206 people are as follows: 48 skilled workers, 32 engineers in operative and project work, 28 white-collar workers, 26 unskilled workers, 24 college students, 21 party and trade-union officials, 8 doctors, 8 administrative workers, 3 theatrical workers, 2 musicians, 2 writers, 1 lawyer and 13 housewives. Of the 206 there are 31 members and candidates for membership in the Communist Party.

About three-fourths of the members of the whole group believe unquestionably the testimony and the confessions of the trials, believe in the necessity of

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arresting suspects and holding them for investigation for long periods of time without indictment and believe in the complete ideological bankruptcy of the Trotskyites. They regard Stalin as the "benevolent father," the "great leader of the working classes of the whole world." This group is interested in local problems immediately concerning their lives, their work and material welfare, and are only incidentally interested in questions of national policy, theoretical polemics and so on. They read the local paper, and occasionally Pravda, or Izvestia. They go to local union meetings, take part in local social life and most of them study in one of the many technical or elementary schools. They rejoice in the improved material conditions of the workers in the Soviet Union, pride themselves that this is the result of their labor, their investments of work, and of the leadership of the Central Committee headed by Stalin. Their overwhelming confidence in Stalin and in the government precludes any questioning of the trials, or sympathy or any liberal attitude toward the defendants. They feel that the trials have made the Soviet Union much stronger in that they have liquidated many enemies, and that any subsequent trials will have the same effect.

The remaining forty-seven, twenty-two of whom are Communists, comprise the most highly conscious, the most experienced and cultured of the whole 206. They have studied history and have enough perspective to see the Soviet Union as a part of a much larger world. They understand something of the direction of its development. This group of "intellectuals" can be divided almost equally into two parts.

The first (which we will call Group B) includes the real Marxist-Leninists according to the academic standards of the Soviet Union. They know History and Economics well, have a good world perspective and attack each new problem critically. On the basis of their intellectual convictions these men and women regard Stalin as the center around whom a correct line has been hammered out, a symbol of a carefully worked-out, correct policy. They believe in the justice of the trials and that the local arrests were necessary, chiefly because in each case they have examined the facts and arrived at their beliefs deductively. The question as to why the defendants of the Moscow trials (Pyatakov, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Tukachevsky, etc.) confessed as they did, they answer by saying: (1) The defendants were trying to make things as easy as they could for their families; (2) the GPU knows how to be very persuasive and very confusing in carrying on an investigation; (3) the defendants realized their ideological bankruptcy, and lack of any program at all worthy of the name, and there was nothing for them to fight for.

Group B is about 50 percent party members and candidates, and the other half are called "non-party bolsheviks." The whole group works actively for the apprehension of "enemies" wherever they come into contact with them.

We are left with about twenty-six workers. Sixteen, whom we will call Group C, believe that the Soviet Union is run by a crowd of bureaucrats, whose main interest is self-preservation. They believe that the trials were either "framed up" or else forced and that the defendants unquestionably confessed beyond their guilt, having made a deal to that effect with the prosecution. They think the local arrests were made in many cases without any dequate evidence.

The men and women of Group C believe that, considering the fact that the Soviet Union is surrounded by a group of hostile capitalist nations which, at the first opportunity, will tear the Union to pieces, and set up a government of landlords and capitalists, it is absolutely necessary to back up the Stalin government in every possible way. That will ensure the survival of the Soviet power, which they regard as unquestionably better than any other government that might come out of a war or a serious internal shake-up.

The remaining ten deserve special attention. Four of them—two administrators, one engineer and one functionary—are just intellectual and practical bandits. They are out to get as much as they can and by any means that present themselves. They have no definite political convictions, regard the others as interested in "feathering their own nests" and the system in general as one of "dog eat dog." Their reaction to the trials and the local arrests is that the defendants were fools to have been caught. Whether they are guilty or not is unimportant. Of these four, three are now in jail: two on charges of embezzlement of state funds, and one on wrecking charges.

Three more of the ten are definite oppositionists. They believe that there is something so wrong in the present regime that the most important problem in the Soviet Union today is the overthrow of the Stalinist bureaucracy. In order to accomplish this they are ready to resort to any expedient. They would rather see a foreign invasion than a continuation of the present government and are willing to cooperate with any groups interested in the overthrow of Stalin. Of these three, two are in jail on charges of counter-revolutionary activities.

Of the remaining three, one of whom is in jail, I hesitate to express an opinion. I have never known them well enough to be satisfied in my own mind as to just what their position is.

By way of general conclusion I think the following may be stated:

The trials, arrests and turnovers met with the unquestioning approval of a vast majority of the population.

The trials and arrests definitely strengthened the Soviet Union, and led in most cases to better morale, higher productivity and increased production.

I am satisfied that in every case but one of those which I observed, the arrests were justified; and the one case is uncertain.

JOHN STEVENS.

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Like a Madman

GEORGE MERKLE, the manager of Elmore Hall, told Ray, the bellhop who had been there only a few months, to come into his office.

"What time'll Vic be on?" the manager asked.

"Not until three, today, Mr. Merkle."

"Know how to get in touch with him?"

"No, I don't."

"Ask the phone girl if she has his number."

Loretta told Ray she didn't know where Vic lived now. She'd tried before to get him at an old number, but he had moved from there. Ray knew where he lived, but he'd promised Vic not to tell anyone in the hotel. He went back to Merkle's office.

"Loretta doesn't know how to get in touch with him," he said.

"Don't suppose Gil's around anywhere?"

"I haven't seen him, Mr. Merkle. If it's anything I could do, Joe could take the floor for me for a while."

"Don't hardly think so, Raymond. There's a drunk up in 419, Connell, has to be pulled together. Somebody's gotta take him down to the steam room and straighten him up. Has to catch a train at one-thirty."

"I could handle him, Mr. Merkle. I used to work in a bar, you know."

Merkle chuckled his disbelief in Ray's ability to handle a drunk; the kid was too soft for that sort of job. "No," he said, "no. Never mind, Raymond. I'll figure out some other way."

In about fifteen minutes Merkle came out of his office and up to where Ray was standing by the sand-pot. "Get Joe on the floor," he said. When Ray had summoned the Negro porter, Merkle said, "Joe, take the floor for a while. Raymond, come with me." They took an elevator up to the fourth floor.

The door to 419 was ajar, and Merkle pushed it open and walked in, the bellboy following. Connell was sitting on the bed, his head hung far forward, his hands clasped between his knees. His face was wet with tears, and his breath came in little shuddering gasps. The room was littered with soiled laundry, empty ginger-ale and whiskey bottles, and cigarette butts. Connell had evidently been trying to pack the two suitcases that lay open on the floor. He wore trousers and an undershirt, and he had pulled on one sock and had a shoe partly on that foot. His head came up slowly, and he looked at the manager and the bellhop with wide, red-rimmed, expressionless eyes. He spoke to the bellhop.

"H'lo, pal," he said.

"Hello, Mr. Connell," Ray said. Connell was a swell guy. He tipped a quarter for anything you did, and he always seemed apologetic that it wasn't more. He was young and Irish, and, when he was sober and well dressed, handsome.

Merkle emptied the remaining half-pint of whiskey in the washbowl.

"Don't let him get his hands on no more of that poison, Raymond," he said.

"Don' do that to me," Connell said sadly, resignedly.

"Come ahn, come ahn," Merkle said. "Have to pull yourself together, Connell. Be a man now, Connell, be a man."

"Tha's right," Connell said. "Be man."

"Boy here's gonna help you pack and get straightened out, Connell. Think you can handle him, Raymond?"

"Don' need any handling," Connell said. "Little help's all I need. Can't seem get things under control."

"I'll get him down to the steam room for a little workout, Mr. Merkle. Then I'll get him dressed and do his packing for him in no time." He put a hand on Connell's shoulder. "Mr. Connell," he said, "let's you and me go down to the steam room. You'll be all right."

"If you need any help, Raymond, call down and I'll get one of the engineers or housemen to give you a hand. Take it easy, now." Merkle went off down the hall.

Ray had some trouble getting Connell to put on his swimming trunks and stand on his feet. It wasn't as hard as it might have been, because Connell seemed somewhat anxious to get sobered up. He had a hard time keeping his balance, though. Ray got a bathrobe on him and took him to the elevators, supporting him with an arm around his back. They had to wait a few minutes to get an elevator that didn't carry any other passengers. Easter Johnson took them down.

"Uh-uh," she said. "I'm ashamed of you, Mr. Connell."

" 'S O.K.," Connell said." M'pal here'll fix me up."

Murfin, the fat, elderly man who was in charge of the pool, steam room and gym, was out to lunch. Merkle had evidently had one of the engineers turn on the steam. There was no one else in the pool.

Ray regulated one of the showers, making it pretty hot, and told Connell to get in and give himself a good soaping before going into the steam room. Connell got in and Ray pulled the curtain around him. Connell kept falling against the curtain and Ray had to hold him on his feet through the curtain. Ray gave him a few minutes of shower and then took him to the steam room. When he opened the door a gray, stifling cloud of steam met them. Connell seemed in a daze, as though he couldn't quite comprehend anything that happened or was said to him. Ray had taken off his uniform jacket and rolled up his sleeves, but he couldn't keep from getting wet. He told Connell to cross the steam room and sit on one of the benches at the farther end. At first Ray couldn't see anything of Connell through the thick steam, but finally he distinguished his legs and knees, crooked in such a way that he must be sitting on the bench. He closed the door. About five minutes of that, he decided, should do something for him.

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Ray walked around the pool. If Murfin were there, he'd give him hell for walking on the tiles with his shoes on, but Murfin wasn't there. The gym door was locked, but Ray had a key to it in case someone wanted to use it while Murfin was off duty, which was pretty much of the time. Murfin was a former guest who was working off his back rent by acting as supervisor of the gym, and he didn't take his position very seriously.

Connell didn't answer when Ray opened the door to the steam room and called him. He called again and again, but he heard nothing, and could see nothing through the thick steam. He was suddenly fearful that Connell had passed out, and he rushed in through the steam and stumbled on Connell's body on the floor. Up near, he could see him well, and he grasped him under the armpits and dragged him to the fresh air.

Connell was all right. He had only been put to sleep by the heavy steam. His face was red and puffed, but he looked much soberer than he had been. Ray got him under the shower again, started it hot and turned the spigots gradually until the water was icy. Connell yelled and jumped around, but he kept his balance. He tried to get out a couple of times but Ray forced him back in. Ray was pretty wet by now, and it took all his strength to keep Connell in the cold shower. He wasn't sure it was the best thing for him, this sudden change from hot to cold, but he imagined Connell could take it; he seemed like a healthy young guy.

Connell forced himself to swim the length of the pool a couple of times, and as he got out Ray told him they'd have to hurry if he was going to catch that train.

"That's right," he said, "the train. That's right." He was pretty sober now, but he seemed like one walking in a trance. His reactions were retarded; there seemed to be a great deal of ponderous deliberation behind the simplest move he made.

The freight elevator was in the basement, and Ray took Connell up to the fourth floor in it. Connell could do everything for himself now, but he didn't seem to care whether he got dressed or not. He stood before the mirror and took up his comb. He combed his hair down over his forehead, to make a part, and then he stopped with the hand that held the comb poised in mid-air, and looked at himself in the mirror, with something uncomprehending in his eyes, as though he had expected to see someone else there.

"Come on, kid," Ray said, patting him on the shoulder. "Got to catch that train."

If Connell heard, he made no sign of it. He wasn't looking at his image in the mirror now, but only his eyes had moved, downward. Ray took the comb from his hand and took Connell by the shoulders and forced him to sit on the bed; then he combed Connell's black, curly hair up over his head. Ray shook Connell gently and told him to pull himself together. The funny thing was, the guy seemed absolutely sober; just couldn't make himself function.

"Give me a drink, kid," Connell said in a far-away voice.

"Merkle poured the last of it down the sink," Ray said.

"There's another pint in my bag, there, under the shirts."

"O.K.," Ray said, "if you'll just take one good, long slug and then forget about it." He got the bottle from Connell's bag, let him take a pull at it, and then put it back.

"Come on," Ray said, "we've got to make it snappy."

It was pretty quick work getting Connell dressed and throwing his stuff into his two suitcases. The drink seeemd to have helped him. When they were ready to go, Connell handed Ray a five-dollar bill.

"Thanks a lot, kid," Connell said. He looked Ray full in the face, and his expression seemed more inquisitive and puzzled than anything else. He looked at Ray a long time like that, and then his whole face began to twitch, the lines around his mouth and eyes crinkled, and he sat down on the bed like some heavy object suddenly dropped, and looked straight ahead of him. He drew his breath in convulsive jerks, making a sharp whistling sound against his teeth, and each exhalation was like the sudden deflation of a balloon.

"Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!" he cried. He dug his nails hard into his knees.

Ray got the pint of whiskey out of the bag and gave Connell a swig of it. When he had taken the drink he was able to check his sobbing. He looked at Ray with eyes empty of everything but anguish.

"I've got to catch that train," he said dully. "I've got to go to Pittsburgh to bury my wife."

"Christ!" Ray said. "You poor bastard."

Connell took the bellhop's hand and crushed it in his until the bones cracked. "She was just a kid," he said, "she was just a kid," and he kept repeating the words until they were lost in another paroxysm of grief.

Ray doused Connell's head in cold water and straightened his clothes and gave him another drink and told him not to think about it. Connell paid his bill at the desk and Ray got him a taxi and told the driver to see that he got on the right train. He came back through the lobby, headed for the tailor-shop to see if he could get a dry uniform, and Merkle, who was standing by the desk talking to Meigs, the room-clerk, stopped him.

"I want you to hear this, Raymond," Merkle said. "If that Connell ever comes back again, we're all out of rooms, see. I want you boys to remember that, and Meigs, I want you to be sure and tell the other clerks that, too. Under no consideration does he get a room in this hotel again. We can't have that sort of thing going on in here. Why, the men on his floor said that he was walking up and down in the halls since six o'clock this morning, stopping everybody he met and trying to talk to them like a damned madman."

CARLTON BROWN.

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Shoot the Works

Broun Takes the Air and Spikes Some Mean-Spirited Rumors—Puts Humor in Its Place—So He Won't Talk?

IT SEEMS to me," said my secretary, "that you talk too much."

"Whatever can you be hinting at, Miss Madison?" I replied in as mollifying a voice as possible.

She was pasting old columns in a scrapbook. Except on the numerous days when we forget all about it, we keep them on file for some obscure purpose which escapes me. At any rate, Miss Madison's rancor appeared to be in some way associated with the litter which lay on the desk in front of her.

"I do not read you every day," she continued waspishly, "and I seldom agree with you, but judging from these recent effusions you are beginning to suffer from delusions of grandeur. Who gave you the authority to tell everybody where he gets off? Don't you like anybody?"

"Why, Connie," I continued in some surprise, "how ever can you say such a thing? You know I like you very much. In fact I've loved you ever since that night you greeted me on my homecoming from the Guild meeting with, 'Lost your overcoat! Smell like a brewery! And now you're on strike!' "

"Please," said my secretary, "don't try and change the subject. I refer, of course, to your attitudes and comments on fellow columnists and on men in public life. How would you feel if they put you on a spot and on a national hookup like Justice Black and you had to justify yourself in a fifteen-minute radio speech?"

"I try not to waste my time in cogitation on academic things," I assured her. "Naturally I haven't given a thought to the contingency that you suggest, but if by any remote chance the situation arose I believe I would devote the greater part of my time to a bitter attack on conceit, sloth and indulgence in beverage alcohol. The whole thing would wind up with a brilliant plea for clean living."

"You have two slits for eyes this morning," she said with complete irrelevance, and added, "I'd like to be on that broadcast with you to ask the questions."

"Why not?" I assented eagerly. "Instead of playing that this is an office and I'm a writer and you're a stenographer let's pretend it's a radio studio and I'm being sponsored by a headache powder. Bong! Bing! Bong! We're on the air. Shoot!"

"How do you feel this morning, Mr. Broun?"

"Why, I took a draught of Little Miracle Water just before retiring and I feel elegant. So what?"

"Are you a labor agitator?"

"I hope so. At least I mean to be when I grow up."

"How can you square that with the fact that you are reputed to have earned an excellent salary for a number of years?"

"I have $21.75 in the bank right now."

"Please do not evade the issue. You could have saved your money. You wasted it in riotous living perhaps?"

"Who knows? It certainly seems to have gone somewhere, but at least I have no Peruvian bonds to show for it and no unconscious economic urge to join the Liberty League."

"Is it true, Mr. Broun," asked my secretary, "that you are a very cantankerous person always spoiling for a fight with somebody?"

"Don't be ridiculous. I'm the most timid man who ever dictated to you. I'm afraid of open places, closed places, barking dogs, electric elevators, stray cows, elephants in captivity and all business men with loud voices."

"Sometimes you write as if you were mad."

"Sure, but a typewriter is different. It's like a dugout. You can hide in it."

"But haven't you lost or mislaid something? Didn't you have a sense of humor once upon a time and isn't it true that since you've been bitten with a Messianic complex you take yourself too seriously and have become as dull as ditchwater?"

"If we weren't on the air, Miss M., I could answer those last few cracks completely with a single five-letter word. I could also make a speech on it. In fact I have. How much time have we got left? All right, hang on to your hat, here comes the oratory. People say, 'Thank God, I have a sense of humor.' I've never included that in any prayer acknowledging Divine favors. It were better to have a millstone hung around the neck. Humor is the coward's livery, and there is great wisdom in the popular challenge, 'Laugh that off.' Generally we laugh at the things we're afraid to face and fight. If the story of Peter in the house of the High Priest were set down in more detail we would probably learn that some funny remark accompanied his denial of association with Christ. Peter made a joke of the charge, and there was superb irony in the crowing of the cock, for that sound came hard on the heels of the apostate's cackle. Hell is not paved with good intentions but with wisecracks. Humor is grit, or maybe lack of grit, in the path of progress. 'Does it matter?' is the underlying mood in almost every expression of humor. And, of course, it does matter. 'Oh, he takes himself too seriously,' is the standardized reproach set up to tangle the feet of all marching men."

"That, Mr. Broun, is out of The Morning World of March 22, 1927."

"Yes, and The World-Telegram of 1931 and The Nation around Christmas time of 1933. But it's just as true even if I do indulge in repetition and auto-plagiarism."

"But, Mr. Broun, may I ask for the sake of the record just where you are marching? I did see you just once on the Brooklyn Eagle picket line. Now I don't want to hurt your feelings, but don't you think that at your age and with your figure you look a little ridiculous pounding up and down a pavement carrying a sign?"

"You may be right. But just the same I think I'd look a lot sillier sitting on the lower part of my back at home saying, 'What has any of this got to do with me?' "

"Isn't it true, Mr. Broun, that many years ago you were a good baseball writer?"

"Well, since you bring the subject up, it is true. I was a swell baseball writer, the second or third best of my day."

"Isn't it possible that if you attended to your own knitting you could get to be a writer again? I understand that all this other stuff is just show-off business—an insatiable hunger for publicity and getting your picture in the paper."

"Did you ever see my picture? All right, then don't talk like a perfect ——. What a pity. Our time's up and I did want to finish that sentence."

HEYWOOD BROUN.

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Washington Notes

The President Speaks on War and Peace—Colonel Westbrook Leads an Attack—Molding the South's Opinion

LAST WEEK Mr. Roosevelt's "quarantine" speech on foreign affairs at Chicago puzzled Washington. Probably it can best be interpreted in the light of his previous actions. Warfare between Japan and China broke out in August, and the President declined to invoke the 1937 Neutrality Act, in apparent defiance of its plain terms. Observers quickly predicted that he meant to play an active part in Far Eastern affairs. Early in September, however, Mr. Roosevelt went fishing in Long Island Sound, and there gave warning to Americans in China that they remained at their own risk. This sounded as if he intended to follow an isolationist program, but the next day the State Department, apparently with Mr. Roosevelt's knowledge, announced that Americans in China would continue to receive diplomatic protection. Two weeks later came Mr. Roosevelt's order forbidding government-owned vessels to transport munitions to China. Again this was followed by official explanations pointing out that other American vessels were free to carry whatever munitions they wished. Last week was Mr. Roosevelt's Chicago speech, which, by a slight stretching of his words, might be taken to mean that the United States was prepared to join other nations in economic sanctions against Japan.

The likeliest explanation is that Mr. Roosevelt wants to keep this country out of war, and at the same time is desperately eager to assume leadership in bringing about world peace, and has no clear idea how these two purposes can be reconciled. Beneath the surface confusion of this statements, however, the State Department steadily engages in traditional power politics. The only thing that seems sure is that the Neutrality Act will continue to be neglected.

A month ago, an account was given in these Notes of the attempt now being made to organize the cotton planters of the South against the Roosevelt administration, and particularly against Mr. Wallace's proposed farm bill. The "front man" for this movement is Colonel Lawrence Westbrook, ex-New Dealer and former deputy administrator of the WPA. Recently administration members have been both entertained and shocked to learn that Colonel Westbrook has been in friendly conference with Mr. Robert Harriss, of the Wall Street cotton-brokerage firm of Harriss and Vose. To avoid possible misconception, I should say that administration members do not charge that Mr. Harriss is sponsoring Colonel Westbrook's movement, or paying its bills. Nevertheless, they find the sudden chumminess of the two men extremely interesting. The last time Mr. Harriss was engaged in active politics was in 1936, when he was a little-publicized, but highly influential, backer of Father Charles E. Coughlin. During the Union Party's presidential campaign, indeed, Mr. Harriss was reputed to be top man among the Coughlin advisers.

New Dealers have a ready explanation for Mr. Harriss' apparent antipathy to the Roosevelt administration. During the Hoover administration, the Farm Board's cotton-buying business—which was immense—was thrown chiefly to Harriss and Vose. With the coming of the New Deal, the Farm Board's accumulated stocks of cotton were transferred to the AAA cotton pool, at the head of which was put Mr. Oscar Johnston, today manager of the vast Delta and Pine Land Company's plantation in Mississippi. Mr. Johnston promptly divided the Cotton Pool's business among twenty or more brokerage houses. However, since cotton brokers in general opposed the AAA's acreage-restriction policy, it is perhaps unjust to lay Mr. Harriss' anti-administration bias to this particular episode.

Administration members profess to be unable to account for Colonel Westbrook's animus. Before 1933, he was an official of the American Cotton Coöperative Association. When Mr. Roosevelt inaugurated a nationwide relief system, he appeared in Washington with a plan for setting up a series of coöperative communities for dispossessed small planters and sharecroppers. A number of these communities were thereafter established by the old FERA, and Colonel Westbrook rapidly came to be regarded as a significant figure in the New Deal.

When the FERA was transformed into the WPA, the Federal government cut Colonel Westbrook's communities adrift. At the time, it was reported that this was being done under pressure from the Southern planters, who feared that the example of these communities would bring unrest among the South's exploited sharecroppers. Officials say that they would have understood it if the government's action had driven Colonel Westbrook politically leftwards. Instead, he now seems to have associated himself with some of the most reactionary elements in Southers politics—which has some very reactionary elements indeed.

At present Senator "Cotton Ed" Smith, chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and long the enemy of Secretary Wallace, is sponsoring a series of hearings in the South on the administration's farm plans. Part of Colonel Westbrook's job seems to be to assemble hostile witnesses at these hearings. Mr. Johnston, the former cotton-pool manager, is leading the New Deal's counter-attack in speeches before representative groups of planters. The most powerful of the farm lobbyists, Mr. Edward Asbury Oneal III, president of the Farm Bureau Federation, has likewise undertaken the defense of Secretary Wallace.

Colonel Westbrook and his group advocate the old domestic-allotment plan as the government's future farm program. New Dealers regard the domestic-allotment plan as highly reactionary, an opinion with which this department heartily agrees. However, it feels bound to point out that Mr. Wallace's new bill includes some of the domestic-allotment plan's worst features. Essentially both are subsidies, exacted from the mass of consumers and paid over to a relatively small group of producers. Both schemes, in this department's opinion, are ultimately unworkable. However, it must be admitted that Mr. Wallace's plan, because of the smaller subsidy it requires and its emphasis on soil-conservation practices, is by far the less obnoxious.

T. R. B.

Washington.

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Other People's Money

Kemper Simpson Leaves the SEC—The Commission's Growth—Vital Economic Questions It Has Failed to Answer

KEMPER SIMPSON, economist of the Securities and Exchange Commission from its beginning, is now out of the Commission. His departure is one of the posthumous effects of former Chairman Landis' administration. One of the last acts of the former chairman was to bring about the termination of Mr. Simpson's services. This was done by the simple expedient of abolishing the economic division.

On leaving his post Mr. Simpson issued a statement expressing his disappointment at the course of events in the Commission's brief career. It would be a grave injustice to impute this statement to mere chagrin at the abolition of his department. In his statement he said no more and, I think, rather less than he said many times in the Commission itself. He certainly was not without his critics in that Commission, but none of them would say that he lacked frankness or that he ever shrank from saying within the walls of the Commission and to the Commissioners themselves, when it was called for, precisely what he had on his mind.

The case of Kemper Simpson illustrates well the strange form which the Commission took in its growth. From the first there went into its personnel three groups of men. One was the usual run-of-the-mine citizen interested in having a job. The second was the serious and earnest group of students and experts who were sincerely concerned to make the Commission work. The third was a rather large band of former Wall Street employees—brokers, customers' men, accountants and lawyers—who were out of a job during the dark days of '34 or who saw in the Commission an excellent opportunity to acquire a little prestige and some inside education which they could take back to their old haunts and use for a more profitable connection.

It was not long before this latter group were in most of the key positions of the Commission. It was not long after that before other men who began only mildly concerned about the Commission's destiny had struck up intimacies with these supposedly sapient Wall Streeters.

Joseph P. Kennedy, the first chairman, had the well worn illusion that to operate a regulatory commission it is necessary to staff it with so-called experts from the industry which is to be regulated. When I criticized this policy at the time I was told that this was a narrow view; that it did not follow that a man's connection with one kind of business poisoned his mind so hopelessly with bias that he could never exchange his old attitudes for more objective ones. Of course I had to assent to this. But I have no faith in the regeneration of old brokerage and Wall Street law-office employees who have it in the back of their heads to get back to their former colleagues as soon as that becomes profitable again. Kennedy's appointees remained on the Commission long enough to mold and point its character. They have since been departing in large numbers to brokerage suites, investment law factories, banks, etc., where their talents are now being used by the gentlemen they were recently being paid by the government to police.

Kemper Simpson was one of those who were interested in making a career in the government service, so that he might devote his mind singly and objectively to the performance of his functions without having one eye always peeled for the first good chance that drifted his way.

Never, it seemed to me, did a public administrator make a graver mistake than to suppose that the kind of "expert" talent he could hire in Wall Street was the sort the Commission needed. This commission was set up to guard the investor and the public from the evils of security speculation. To do that, of course, it had to hire some men who knew something of the mechanical and technical functions of the investment banker, the broker, the Exchange. But, far more important, it had to know not something, but all that was possible about the social and economic consequences of security operations. It is naïve, to say the least, to suppose that because a fellow knows how to run a customer's order through a broker's office or how to calculate a margin shortage, or how to execute an order on the floor, that he also knows about the economic effects of the acts which he is performing. A man may be an excellent neighborhood grocer or a good bookkeeper in a market and know how to buy cheap and sell dear without having the slightest conception of the economic significance of any of his acts.

When this Commission set up for business everything that was involved in the mechanics of security trading was known and knowledge could be hired for small sums. But what was not known—and is not known any more clearly to this day—was the effects upon society, socially and economically; the effects upon industry produced by security speculation. The first and most commanding duty of that Commission was to blaze the way in this still little-explored area of economics. No commission can discharge intelligently its duties until it thoroughly understands this subject; until it knows where it wants to go.

On that stage of its operations the Commission has done next to nothing. It knows scarcely more about the mysterious force it deals with than it did when it was organized. It has been fussing around, as Mr. Simpson points out, with the technical and mechanical problems of running a security business and has let the broader and more important problems go. And now it has abolished its economic division. It has a division of research, but this is little if anything more than a statistical department. If the Commission believed Mr. Simpson was not the man to head its economic division it should have found someone else—the very ablest man it could find—and given him ample staff and means of exploring its problems. Instead it starved the economic division so as to render it as helpless as possible.

One criticism of Mr. Simpson's statement is the seemingly implied criticism of William O. Douglas, the new chairman, which is found in what might be taken as a reply to Mr. Douglas' recent observation that the Commission cannot save a fool from his folly. Mr. Douglas was wholly right in that. And it is difficult for me to believe that Mr. Simpson had any criticism of Mr. Douglas in mind. Mr. Douglas has been a most constant friend to the idea of investigation and research—indeed perhaps one of the only commissioners hospitable to that perfectly obvious course. The faults discussed here were the work of his predecessors.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

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Star-Hitched

The Star-Wagon, by Maxwell Anderson. The Empire Theatre, September 29, 1937.

THE DEVICE by which Mr. Anderson's newest play contrives to evolve its story is the time-idea familiar to us in Indian thinking, in various modern philosophers, stories and dramas. The idea scarcely needs to be stated here; but briefly is that all time exists together, that it is as if we were walking in a dark garden with a lantern, and what happens at the moment is what the lantern for the moment brings into view; in sum there is no past, present or future, but time only, *et cetera*. To this may be added the Anglo-Saxon remark that man's life is like a bird flying in from the darkness outside and back into that darkness; we have it in all the school histories, and no harm in that. "The Star-Wagon" gives us plenty of food for thought, as to why, for example, it is not better than it is, why it is as good, and why it is not worse.

Certainly the play enjoys many advantages in production. Mr. Guthrie McClintic brings to it his usual expert directing. He comes short, if at all, in obtaining a unity of tone, which is to say how far shall the whole piece be a sum of fantasy, how far a plainer comedy, how far lyric, reflective, what not? To what extent this was the director's fault I could not tell. It seemed to me that much of the fault was in the play. Not seldom you could see the actors struggling with the same problems of indeterminate tone, shifting planes. Whereas one thing is certain if you are to get a solid, secure effect, and that is that there must be to the whole play or scene or role a single reality. It must be, all else aside, at least a reality in its own kind. And it is what in the end everything about the performance must keep coming back to, to test and perfect itself.

Mr. Burgess Meredith in the role of the old inventor showed that pure, right spirit of approach that we have seen in his work already; he brings to his stage performances something almost translucent. In his first scenes, where he is the old man, he seemed to me soundly good, but on the surface too slow and too monotonous in the emotional values. If we went in for any final requirement we should be obliged to say that for these scenes the performance requires essentially what the older Moscow Art Theatre would have trained toward for years; but this, though a compliment really, is asking a great deal of a young actor. Oftener than not in "The Star-Wagon," Mr. Meredith is excellent. Miss Lillian Gish, as the battered wife and the young girl, seemed to me to prove rather finally that in acting she is nearly always amateur. She makes her points and her transitions in a manner that is basically amateur—only an actor perhaps would know in just what sense this is true. Miss Gish does, however, establish the necessary points clearly. And she brings an inner rightness to the part, a luminous, fragile something that in many respects is worth more to it than anything most actors could contribute. Mr. Russell Collins' portrayal of the eccentric, the lifelong friend of the inventor, the thorn in the wife's side, and so forth, is thoroughly professional. When it wavers it wavers because the writing of the part does so. Perhaps merely to cut loose and hit matters up, all reckless, grotesque homeliness and exuberance, would be the best way to give the character a clean, full outline. Miss Mildred Natwick as Mrs. Rutledge, who has been to Europe and comes back to teach the church choir the refinements of singing and demeanor, gives what seems to me a faultless performance. All the details visually are seen to, with thoroughness and with wit; and you may watch curiously how to what might be mere character acting, or even caricature, there is added a constant finish, in movement, inflection, sly comment, that makes for our pleasure and for unobtrusive stage loveliness. The smaller roles are cast generally with Mr. McClintic's remarkable acuteness in that direction.

Finally there is Mr. Jo Mielziner's designing of the production. I can think of nobody who could have done it so well. With that said, I may say that the costumes were sometimes excellent, sometimes in need of a little more wit in their conception, though here again the mood of the play was apt to intervene or interrupt. The bicycle shop was capital, the prose details in many of the scenes were right and were fun to note. The drawing-room for the rich, bored couple did not quite come off; something cavernous and even visceral about it left us, as the Japanese scholar said of the Holy Ghost dove, flammuxed and perplexed. But you could see it began in wit, and that fact in itself recommends it to us above some more successful, or safer, platitude in luxurious housing. The entire production is admirably lighted.

The first section of the play is reported now to be considerably shorter. How much that helps remains to be seen; certainly when I saw it, this part seemed interminably dull, very dependent on the stars acting it, and heavy sledding at that. The characters and a few domestic details needed to be established—the manufacturers' unfair treatment of the inventor, his dismissal, his return that night to carry off the new invention—and we should soon have been ready for the story that was to follow. I had read nothing in advance about "The Star-Wagon," save that it was a comedy, and when after all that pother, the lengthy scene with the gangsters—who never seem to reappear in the rest of the play—the rather grave suggestions emerging about capital, labor, contentment, creation, justice, loyalty and what not, the new invention turned out to be merely the device by which the story was switched back and the characters seen in their youth, I felt a genuine resentment. The sheer amount of time taken before this simple and well worn trick was turned seemed rash, shiftless and confused, and hard to understand in a professional playwright.

So we are back now in the year 1902, the Fourth of July is on us. The young inventor has made one of the earliest automobiles. Presently we see the inventor married to the other girl and his wife to the other man, as his wife, in a burst of resentment during the opening scene, had said they should have done. Here I must have missed something about the invention, which we are to suppose capable of turning on any event existing within time; but since this course of events had never happened and would never happen, and could not therefore be found within time, the motif breaks down. Perhaps this is some added fantasy, but it seemed to make all the more gratuitous the long-drawn-out business before the machine was sprung.

The virtues of "The Star-Wagon" are in a certain loving touch not seldom given the story and the characters,

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and in the remarkable variety not only in people, customs and places, but in moods, themes and chances to act. Above all else the play shines for its Americana, seen with so much knowledge and affection. It serves to remind us anew of the vast stores of American material to the theatre completely unknown.

STARK YOUNG.

The Bandwagon

The situation in China is a highly unfortunate one. But this tragic conflict is not of our seeking. We did all in our power to avoid hostilities, but hostilities were foisted upon us.—*Kanama Wakasugi, Japanese Consul General in New York, in a broadcast over the Columbia System, quoted in The New York Herald Tribune.*

American business men, with few exceptions, are heartily in sympathy with good wages and fair working conditions for labor, as the record of industrial development in this country so strikingly shows.—*From the monthly letter of the National City Bank of New York.*

The attempt to clothe [contraception] with the garments of decency by an appeal to values necessarily lower, such as health or economic expediency, is the very height of immorality. It is the unforgivable sin . . . the perversion of the guiding principle itself, the intellect.—*Father Ignatius W. Cox, S.J., writing in Liberty Magazine.*

THEY DO WELL IN KANSAS

We have planted several rose bushes at our farm. Only one has survived the ravages of insects, the heat and the drought. That rose is the President Hoover. The great statesman for whom this flower was named met with unflinching courage the unjust treatment and ruthless criticisms of his enemies—so this rose stands triumphant among his fellows.—*From a letter signed Morrison Munford Bower, published in The Kansas City Star.*

ESSENCE OF DREADNOUGHT

Egoiste is the scent of the celebrity and the socially secure. It is the parfum supreme for the woman whose frock sets the vogue, whose bon mot is quoted and whose personality endows her with an aura not surrounding the average woman. If you can look into your mirror and say truthfully you belong to this coterie, why not scent your skin with the perfume that is a perfect match for your ego?

Like the other Parfums Revillon, Egoiste is invincible when it is applied directly to the person.—*From a perfume advertisement in Esquire.*

DEPARTMENT OF FEAR AND FOREBODING

China has not armed, it has not believed in preparedness. . . . China chatters carelessly. But hold! There is smoke on the horizon. Battleships. Japan. It comes. It is prepared. It takes.

America ambles aimlessly. Spending. Happy life. But wait! A cloud—a specter, gaunt specter. Larger and larger. Inflation. It comes. It will take.—*From an article by H. Bond Bliss, in The Miami, Fla., Herald.*

CAN HE GET A TICKET FIXED?

So you see, a St. Christopher medal in a car can do a lot of good. Indirectly it can stop skids, blow-outs or any other calamity, if one has faith in the prayers of a saint and appreciation of the fact that God can do anything He wants to.—*From an advertisement of the Catholic Information Society of Richmond, appearing in The Richmond, Va., Times-Dispatch.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic.—THE EDITORS.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sharecropper Earnings

SIR: I wish to call attention to some glaring inaccuracies in the article of Mr. Jonathan Mitchell purporting to compare incomes on Sherwood Eddy's coöperative project and tenant income in the South from my plantation study. Since Mr. Mitchell quoted my name in his article I trust that you will publish this disclaimer of certain fallacies in his reasoning.

I do not wish to put myself in the position of opposing or discouraging Mr. Eddy's experiment as I am all in favor of a wide range of experimentation in meeting the tenant problem. However, a good cause may be embarrassed seriously when its professional sympathizers begin by mishandling statistics to claim too much.

Mr. Mitchell has done several very naïve things:

1. In arriving at the income figure for the Eddy project he simply lumps the receipts from all sources (including, as he says, lumber and a sawmill) and after deducting expenses divides by the number of tenants, arriving at the figure $327. This he presumes is comparable to the $122 which he quotes from my study. My study rigidly excluded income from plantation gins, sawmills, commissaries and any other non-agricultural enterprise. If Mr. Mitchell had done this, his figure would have been considerably lower. Also, he admits that he makes no offset charge for management, which he estimates to be worth $25,000 to the enterprise. Were this charged instead of treated as philanthropy the income would have been still lower.

2. Mr. Mitchell selects from my study a "cash income" figure of $122 to compare to his. He misconstrues entirely the use of the figure. The table from which this figure was drawn was designed to show how much cash money the tenant handled. In addition, the tenants in question had subsistence advances (income in produce drawn in advance amounting to about $90) which would increase Mr. Mitchell's quoted figure by 75 percent.

3. Mr. Mitchell falls into the fallacy of comparing my average, which was a Southwide average, with the Eddy average, which was earned in the Delta, the richest cotton section. The income of Delta croppers according to my records (excluding home-use production) were $252 instead of the figure $122 which Mr. Mitchell used for a Southwide average.

4. Mr. Mitchell compares the incomes of my croppers, who own no machinery or work animals, with the Delta Coöperative Farm occupants who receive returns from the ownership of equipment and animals as well as from their labor. Such income is more comparable to that of "other share tenants" in my study, who

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earned $327 in the Delta—a figure exactly the same as Mr. Mitchell's purported cash income of the Delta Coöperative.

In other words, it would take an expert farm accountant to draw anything like a controlled comparison between the two groups, but on the face of the figures it would seem that such comparison would probably indicate that the Delta coöperators, given an extremely favorable interest rate and management furnished by philanthropy, succeeded in making slightly if any more than their neighbors under the existing system.

T. J. Woofter, Jr.,
Coördinator of Rural Research,
Division of Social Research.

Washington, D. C.

SIR: I did not intend to suggest that I was attempting a completely accurate comparison between the Delta Coöperative figures and those of Mr. Woofter's study. In my naïve way, I pointed out a more serious difficulty than any Mr. Woofter mentions: namely, that the Delta Coöperative figures are for the year 1936, while his are for 1935. Nevertheless, I regret that the indignities visited on his statistics have wounded Mr. Woofter. All of us who are concerned about the fate of the sharecropper are immensely grateful for "Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation," and all of us, I am sure, hope that before long Mr. Woofter will give us an equally authoritative study of the potentialities of production coöperatives.

Jonathan Mitchell.

Washington, D. C.

Support the American Labor Party

SIR: New York City readers of *The New Republic* need hardly be reminded that the American Labor Party campaign in their city is a significant development in the field of political action. Progressives the country over have been talking and hoping for a labor party, nationally as well as locally, for many years. That party is here. It needs your support to make it a permanent part of the American scene.

Until now, all maintenance and campaign expenses have been borne by the affiliated trade unions and the 50-cent memberships-at-large. This party is not likely to attract the tremendous gifts that other political parties live on. We take pride in that fact. But it must have the financial support as well as the votes of large groups in American life, since most of its contributions will necessarily be small ones.

This situation is unique in American political history because the party itself is unique. We are asking people like the readers of The New Republic, who have never given political parties financial support before, to break this long standing tradition by supporting a party that is really their own. We are asking for as generous support as you possibly can give.

Please make your checks payable to Morris L. Ernst or the Citizens' Finance Committee, American Labor Party Headquarters, Hotel Claridge, Forty-Fourth Street and Broadway, New York City.

Morris L. Ernst, Chairman,
Citizens' Finance Committee,
American Labor Party.

New York City.

The Recall for the Supreme Court

SIR: It should be apparent by now that those who have raised the hue and cry in the Black matter have evaded a fairly obvious conclusion. That is, after his appointment to the Bench, no matter what is discovered about the activities of a Supreme Court Justice before his appointment, be those activities vicious or dishonest, the people, the President and Congress are powerless to rectify a bad appointment.

The remedy to such a situation would seem to be to make the Supreme Court amenable to some democratic check, such as the recall, or to limit the length of the term of a Justice to a number of years.

Peter Schneider.

New York City.

From The New Republic Mailbag

Bernard McGillian of Chicago, Illinois, writes to express his amazement at The New Republic's acceptance of the story of the "massacre in the bull ring at Badajoz, Spain." . . . M. K. Perey of Denver, Colorado, says John Cheever's short story, "The Teaser" [September 8], gave her "a feeling of disgust." She feels the story had no place in a Journal of Opinion.

F. W. Lynch of San Diego, California, hopes that The New Republic "will soon publish a brief summary of the changes made in the Supreme Court under the various administrations." He points out that the list of "court packers" would include Washington, Lincoln and Grant. . . . George H. Nutt of Riverton, New Jersey, expresses his violent dislike of five-page articles, however good they may be.

Harlan R. Crippen, 1126 Eighth Avenue, S. W., Aberdeen, South Dakota, is writing a biography of Senator Richard E. Pettigrew and would appreciate correspondence from New Republic readers who have material about him. . . . Scott Nearing of Ridgewood, New Jersey, objects to John T. Flynn's statement in the October 6 issue that war "is the negation of civilization." "War," writes Mr. Nearing, "is not the negation of civilization, but its consummation. Once we learn to think of civilization and war as complementary . . . we shall be ready to dispense with both and advance to . . . an organized, planned world society in which neither profit-making nor war-making will play any part."

We have received the first monthly letter of the Institute for Propaganda Analysis, an organization devoted to the "objective analysis of today's propagandas, their sources and the channels through which they flow." Further information about the new group may be obtained from its office at 132 Morningside Drive, New York City.

The Book and Magazine Guild writes from 69 Lexington Avenue, New York City, about a symposium on "Inspirational Books," with Dr. Joseph Jastrow, Milton Wright, Clifton Fadiman and Ralph Bates as speakers, at the Hotel Claridge on Monday, October 18, at 8 P.M. This will be the first of a series of literary forums under the auspices of the Guild and The League of American Writers.

More than one hundred Chinese students at Columbia University, New York City, sent there by American missions and by relatives are virtually destitute as a result of Japan's invasion of their native land. The American League Against War and Fascism informs us that a committee of students and professors is being formed to aid the Chinese students, headed by Miss Ziporah Wollman, a student at Teachers' College. The new group needs all the support it can get.

What's on the Air?

Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, speaks from Houston, Texas, at the annual banquet of the International Petroleum Association of America. Friday, October 15, 11:30 P.M., CBS.

On Saturday, October 16, Howard Gill, secretary of the Interstate Prison Compact, is interviewed on parole and probation problems by Mrs. Hereford Dugan, noted criminologist, at 6:45 P.M., CBS.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt talks on a program called "Mobilization for Human Needs," which features the music of the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra. Monday, October 18, 10:30 P.M., NBC-Red Network. President Roosevelt speaks again on Wednesday, October 20, on the occasion of the dedication of the new National Reserve Building, with Marriner S. Eccles, governor of the Federal Reserve Board, 2:45 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

Musical programs of the week include the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra with Artur Rodzinski conducting, Saturday, October 16, 9:30 to 10:30 P.M., NBC-Red Network; an international broadcast from Warsaw, Poland, with Henry Sztompka playing for the Chopin anniversary, Sunday, October 17, 11:30 A.M., NBC-Blue Network, and on Monday, October 18, the Philadelphia Orchestra with Feodor Chaliapin, Russian basso, directed by Eugene Ormandy, 9 to 10 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

All times given are Eastern Standard Time.

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Fall Book Section

Hemingway: Work in Progress[1]

CHIEF among Hemingway's virtues as a writer is his scrupulous regard for fact, for reality, for "what happened." It is a rare virtue in the world of letters. Most writers want to please or shock, to be "accomplished craftsmen" or to be "original"; in both cases their work is determined by literary fashions, which they either follow or defy. From the very first, Hemingway did neither, since his aim was simply to reproduce the things he had seen and felt—"simply," I say, but anyone who has tried to set down his own impressions accurately must realize that the task is enormously difficult; there is always the temptation to change and falsify the story because it doesn't fit into a conventional pattern, or because the right words are lacking. Hemingway himself had to find a whole new vocabulary, one in which old or popular words like "good," "nice" and "rotten" are given fresh values. But it always makes me angry to hear people speaking of his "lean, hard, athletic prose." Sometimes his prose is beautiful, poetic in the best sense, in its exact evocations of landscapes and emotions. Sometimes it is terse and efficient. Sometimes, with its piling up of very short words, it gives the effect of a man stammering, getting his tongue twisted, talking too much but eventually making us understand just what he wants to say.

During the last ten years Hemingway has been imitated more widely than any other American or British writer, even T. S. Eliot. You find his influence everywhere from the pulp-paper true-detective-story weeklies to the very little magazines making no compromise with the public taste. You find it in newspapers and the movies, in English highbrow novels and even in this weekly journal of opinion. Partly it has been a bad influence. It has made people copy the hard-boiled manner of "The Killers" and "Fifty Grand"—this latter being the cheapest story that Hemingway ever signed. It has encouraged them to boast in print of their love affairs and drinking bouts—though God knows they needed little encouragement. Worst of all, it has caused many young writers to take over Hemingway's vocabulary and his manner of seeing the world—thereby making it impossible for them to be as honest as Hemingway. But in general I think that his influence has been excellent. It has freed many writers—not only novelists but poets and essayists and simple reporters—from a burden of erudition and affectation that they thought was part of the writer's equipment. It has encouraged them to write as simply as possible about the things they really feel, instead of the things they think that other people think they ought to feel. Critics in particular owe a debt to Hemingway; and many of them, including myself, have been slow to acknowledge it. So let me put the record straight. I don't think that he is as great as Tolstoy or Thomas Mann, but I do think that he is perhaps as good as Mark Twain, and that is saying a great deal. In our own generation, he is the best we have.

[1] To Have and Have Not, by Ernest Hemingway. New York. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

His new novel I found easy to read, impossible to lay down before it was finished, and very hard to review. It contains some of the best writing he has ever done. There are scenes that are superb technical achievements and other scenes that carry him into new registers of emotion. As a whole it lacks unity and sureness of effect.

Part of its weakness is a simple matter of plot structure, a department in which Hemingway was never strong. The book falls apart at the beginning and the end. It begins with two long stories about Harry Morgan—both of them, I think, were first published in The Cosmopolitan—and it ends with a fine soliloquy by Harry Morgan's widow. In the intervening pages, Hemingway deals with his principal theme, which is really two themes in counterpoint—on the one side, the life of the Have-Nots, that is, the Key West fishermen and relief workers who surround Harry Morgan; on the other side, the life of the Haves, that is, the wealthy yachtsmen and the drunken writers who winter in the Key West bars. These two themes never quite come together.

But a more serious weakness lies in the characters themselves, or rather in the author's attitude toward his characters. Some of them—the writers for example—are the same sort of people, leading the same sort of lives, as he described in "The Sun Also Rises." In those days Hemingway was unhappy about the lives they were leading, yet he approached the people with real sympathy, going to great pains, for example, to explain to himself why Robert Cohn was really a villain in spite of all his admirable qualities. But this time Hemingway really hates the people; he pictures them not as human beings but as the mere embodiments of lust or folly, as wolves or goats or monkeys disguised with little mustaches and portable typewriters. "All right," Helen Gordon says to her husband. "I'm through with you and I'm through with love. Your kind of picknose love. You writer." It is the final insult. But since Hemingway is a writer himself, this aversion is also a self-aversion, and prophesies a change in his own career —not from literature to fishing, for example, but rather from one kind of writing to another kind. And that change, that transition, is already foreshadowed in his characters. Among the very few that he portrays sympathetically are two Catholics and a Communist war veteran. Harry Morgan himself begins as a tough guy capable of killing people in cold blood, either to get money or to save his hide; but he dies as a sort of proletarian hero.

There is a story behind this novel perhaps more interesting than the story that Hemingway has told. Some day we may know the whole of it; at present I have to reconstruct it from word-of-mouth information and from internal evidence. Hemingway has been working on the book for several years—at the very least, since 1933. It was practically finished a year ago, before he left for Spain. At that time it was a longer novel than in its present version, and it ended in a mood of utter discouragement. When Hemingway returned, full of enthusiasm for the Spanish Loyalists, he must have felt dissatisfied with what he had written; at any rate he destroyed large parts of it.

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It may have been then that he wrote a death scene for Harry Morgan—the scene in which he stammers out with his last few breaths: "One man alone ain't got. No man alone now. . . . No matter how, a man alone ain't got no bloody f—g chance." This might be the message that Hemingway carried back from Spain, his own free translation of Marx and Engels: "Workers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose. . . ." The whole scene is beautifully done, but it doesn't grow out of what has gone before.

There are other scenes that are even stronger, and better integrated with the story—for example, the phantasmagorical drinking and slugging bout of the veterans on relief, and the quarrel between Helen Gordon and her husband, and Mrs. Morgan's last soliloquy. Almost all the women in the novel are portrayed with subtlety and sureness. As a whole, "To Have and Have Not" is the weakest of Hemingway's books—except perhaps "Green Hills of Africa"—but it is by no means the least promising. For some years now the literary hyenas have been saying that Hemingway was done for, but their noses have betrayed them into finding the scent of decay where none existed. From the evidence of this book, I should say that he was just beginning a new career.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

Writers' Project

Massachusetts: A Guide to Its Places and People, written and compiled by the Federal Writers' Project. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 711 pages. $2.50.

Vermont: A Guide to the Green Mountain State, written by the Workers of the Federal Writers' Project. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 415 pages. $2.50.

Dutchess County, compiled by the Workers of the Dutchess County Unit, Federal Writers' Project. Philadelphia: William Penn Association. 173 pages. $1.25.

The Intracoastal Waterway, Norfolk to Key West, compiled by the Federal Writers' Project. Washington: Government Printing Office. 156 pages and maps. 25 cents.

Cape Cod Pilot, by Jeremiah Digges, with Editorial and Research Assistance by Members of the Federal Writers' Project. Provincetown: Modern Pilgrim Press. 403 pages. $2.

ONE OF the paradoxes of the economic crisis we have been struggling through is that under its stress we Americans achieved for the first time many important things that should have been *normal* to our life as a people. It was when everyone was potentially near the brink of starvation that the principle that no one should go without food, whether he was deserving or undeserving, thrifty or shifty, was for the first time accepted as sound public policy. It was when building was stopped, when banks were closed, when offices were evacuated, when tax delinquencies mounted, that our overcrowded cities began to acquire the parks and playgrounds they could not afford during times of prosperity. Finally, it was when writers and artists were thrown on the streets that these groups were for the first time treated as an integral part of American life. Already one can say that more public good has come out of the bankruptcy of the economic order than ever came regularly out of its most flatulent prosperity.

Of all the good uses of adversity, one of the best has been the conception and execution of a series of American guidebooks: the first attempt, on a comprehensive scale, to make the country itself worthily known to Americans. We need no longer depend upon the Chamber of Commerce leaflet and the gasoline-station guide for clues as to where we are and where we might go. Those who will use these guidebooks on their travels or enjoy them (as most of them can be enjoyed, too) at home may not realize at once the fine quality of imagination that went into this series, or the obstacles that were overcome in achieving these excellent results.

Consider the situation. Here were thousands of destitute, or near-destitute writers: every degree of talent and occupational experience from authors of excellent repute, with well established names, down to the publicity men and copy writers who had scarcely had time before 1932 to acquire a job. People of different backgrounds, ill assorted experiences, contradictory and incompatible philosophies of life: lonely men and women, unaccustomed, by the very nature of their work, to the task of coöperation. To ask them to pursue their various specialties, without giving them an outlet, would have been, under the circumstances, an almost cruel demand: many of these people were craftsmen who had no particular creative urge and who needed some external incentive if they were to work happily at all. How organize and focus such talents? The notion of a series of American guidebooks was the happiest possible solution of that difficulty, not because it could be accomplished without effort, but because the task itself needed to be done, and because it lent itself to a viable solution. Whoever had that idea first should be singled out for public thanks.

On the subject of guidebooks I am no specialist; but I am aware of no regional guides to America since Osgood's "Guide to the Middle States"; my copy of the latter bears the date 1874. Our city guides, like Ryder's for Washington, are few and far between. Meanwhile, the motor car has made the American more travel-minded than he was in the days of the pioneer: "going places" has become the popular symbol of vitality and success. And yet this exploration of America, which might be no less exciting and fruitful in its special way than the more conventional trip to Europe, has been stupidly hampered by the lack of preparatory exploration: we discover only what the unaided eye can see. To get even quite commonplace information one had, up to now, to do an excessive amount of private digging. Here was a field that did not tempt the publisher. To do the job well required funds and resources publishers were in no mood to pledge. Even the success of individual guidebooks, like the guide to walking routes in the New York district, did not overcome this commercial apathy. Here was an ideal opening for a government-supported project.

Within a surprisingly short time, considering the many special problems that must have arisen, this work was organized and has been partly brought to completion: and the best of the new guides that are so far available, those for Massachusetts, Vermont and the city of Washington, give one a great thrill of pride: pride in the country they describe and in the capacity and the devotion and the fine anonymous collaboration that has gone into this work.

The New England series, in particular, has been well conceived and carried out. The typographical layout is good, the general arrangement and makeup are excellent and the background material—such as the section on literature in the Massachusetts book—is sometimes brilliantly done. In the historic and descriptive introduction to the various towns and villages the writers have usually struck an admirable balance between interpretation and factual detail; and it is all done with an equability of judgment that makes protests like that of Governor Hurley discreditable in their touchiness and their show of bias.

Occasionally one feels some weakness in our general historic culture, as in the failure to note the existence or the importance of H. H. Richardson's railroad stations in

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Massachusetts, or in the absence of any reference to his magnificently indigenous cottage architecture; but the specialist can always make such judgments on any comprehensive work, and they do not vitiate the real accomplishment. This holds likewise for occasional inaccuracies of fact. The books are not of pocket size; but that, from my point of view, is no handicap: the time to consult a guidebook is before or after starting out on a particular tour or ramble: it is more sensible to carry along a brief memorandum than to break into the stream of one's impressions and experiences by burying one's nose in a guidebook.

One of the happiest things about this series is the fact that it evidences, on the part of the authorities at Washington, a willingness to experiment with different forms and modes of presentation. The intracoastal-waterway guide, for example, was printed by the Government Printing Office: a small but admirable work. The Dutchess County guidebook, from the typographic standpoint, is the poorest in the series: brown ink, on a stiff paper usually found only in prospectuses, with poor photographic reproductions. (The photographs in the Washington, the Massachusetts and the Vermont guides, on the other hand, are beautiful prints, well reproduced, which whet one's appetite for the scenes they reveal—almost worth the price of the guide by themselves.) "The Cape Cod Pilot," again, is the only book actually signed by the main author; it is discursive and anecdotal. I am glad that the experiment of turning out such a book was tried; but I do not think it is so useful as the more systematic guides.

Few of our writers have grown up with Stendhal's devotion to the dry precise style of the Code Napoléon: many of them doubtless have the feeling that such a tract as a guidebook offers no scope for literature. Plainly, of course, there is no place for free fantasy or fabulous creative invention in a guide, but it offers many a real test of literary capacity: the focusing of the subject, the precise epithet, the acute observation, the novelist's insight into his material and that ultimate purity of literary style which is free from merely individualistic mannerism can all find their place in such writing. Not merely *can* find: I should say "often *has* found," for it is precisely in a certain alert gusto that characterizes many of these descriptions that one has the chief difference between the American guidebooks and the dull conventional shorthand of a Baedeker.

These guidebooks are the finest contribution to American patriotism that has been made in our generation: let that be the answer to the weaklings who are afraid to admit that American justice may miscarry or that the slums of Boston may be somewhat this side of Utopia. Let it also silence those who talk with vindictive hooded nods about the subversive elements that are supposed to lurk in the WPA. Guides like those which have been done in New England are indispensable toward creating that new sense of the regional setting and regional history, without which we cannot have an informed and participating body of citizens who will understand the problems that grow out of their intercourse with the earth and with other groups: citizens who will eventually learn the art of socialized living and regional planning and will make the earth their collective home. Future historians will turn to these guidebooks as one who would know the classic world must still turn to Pausanias' ancient guidebook to Greece. And meanwhile, these guides will give to contemporary Americans the opportunity to know and understand intimately their country, as they never had the opportunity, without a lifetime of leisure, to do before. This is no little achievement. May it meet the popular success it fully deserves.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

Interim Report

The Depths and the Heights, by Jules Romains. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

NOW THAT Story is running reviews and general literary criticism, Jules Romains' novel is the only reputable all-fiction periodical on the market. Books Eleven and Twelve of Volume Six are now on sale. Two big features are in this issue.

To the Gutter.—This story has punch: sex, satire, suspense and shrewd comments on literary politics. George Allory, author of three novels and a volume of collected articles, "four works suspended by a thread midway between discreet notoriety and oblivion," realizes that he is written out and that it's time he made his great bid for security by standing for the Academy. He tries for it more wholeheartedly than he has ever tried for anything, and comes close to winning. The defeat half kills him. Bergamot, a writer of pornographic books, saves him by offering him a new experience: a share in life as lived by the Parisian feelthy-postcard people. Allory, searching his new desires, finds that he wants most of all to outrage the modesty of a young girl of smartness and style. This adventure comes off excitingly. Then he falls in love with the girl, shoots himself, and from his hospital bed forces her to promise to give herself.

To the Stars.—The companion piece. Viaur, a young doctor on the staff of a health resort, is doing modest and serious independent research which, he hopes, will add to medical knowledge on the subject of the healing of living tissues. He is thrown off his course by the discovery that a waiter at the resort, who has come to him for advice about insomnia, can stop his heart at will. Viaur tries to evade the challenge of this spectacular phenomenon, but it captures his imagination. He knows that his experiments with the waiter point into the scientifically suspect field of faith-healing, but he goes on. Evidence that the phenomenon can be reproduced, in part at least, by others beside the waiter wins Viaur the support of a first-rate younger man. Viaur may be on the way to working out something.

Other Features.—Readers will be pleased to find many of their old friends in this number, including the coming World War. Strigelius, stricken by literary impotence, evolves a method for producing poetry. Margaret-Desederia leaves her lover Laulerque and Mathilde Cazelis takes him on for her first. Jerphanion and Jallez are in the army and journalism, respectively, and retain their epistolary prowess.

Coming Issues.—Among the features promised for forthcoming publication are the story of Agnes' love for Dr. Lucien Ravenaz, Mathilde's effort to shake loose from her lover and win back young Clanricard, headline news about Viaur, and the War. The War is seen here only through the eyes of the monocled young secretaries of the ministerial big shots, and seems correspondingly trivial.

There is a passage in the book in which Viaur, excited and dismayed by the diversity of possibilities that race through his mind as he lies awake plotting what he expects to be his great work, reassures himself with the thought that "the importance of an idea is measured by the number of its relations." M. Romains would undoubtedly back his scientist in that assertion. If this lively single instalment does not disclose his own point of view, it at least once more makes plain his ability to multiply relations with astonishing virtuosity.

BYRON DEXTER.

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A Letter to Robert Hillyer

Our meetings, Robert, spaced through fifteen years
May just excuse the brashness that inheres
In my addressing by his Christian name
A man who has been Pulitzered to fame.
I've read your letters,[1] and I'm sure you'll find
Most critics fulsome and the others—blind.
Count me among the blind ones. I agree
With what you say about philology—
And little else. The philosophic vein
You cultivate may help you to explain
Why, when some men have won a mild success,
They talk of spirit more and show it less,
And as they richer grow—richer and fatter—
They scold the common herd who worship matter.

To criticize is anybody's right,
But if you jeer you recklessly invite
Comparison, how odious is plain
When Hillyer's set near Eliot or Crane,
Or even Wolfe, if his dense tomes are read
After a startled glance at "Riverhead."
The Hopkins, Faulkners, Pounds you damn *in toto,*
But speak with awed respect of one DeVoto,
The Howells of our age—God save the mark!—
Who's bid his sad farewell to Durgin Park,
To swanboats, Pops, and other Boston joys,
And now laments the humbug and the noise
Of Mannahatta, though there's some suspicion
In both respects he'll offer competition.
At all odds versatile, he quickly shuttles
From co-ed tales to forays and rebuttals.
(His forays fill the women's clubs with awe,
And his rebuttals slaughter men of straw.)
But best he sings "My country 'tis of thee"
To a new tune he brought from Italy.
He was Pareto's single, sole elect
Till Seldes came and multiplied the sect;
As fine a pair of saber-rattling Turks
As ever moaned the treason of the clerks,
Their right to speak for culture quite as plain
As that of Moors to fight for Christ in Spain.

Like them you hate the Reds and seem to think
That Marx was just another Cambridge Pink.
Your treasures, Robert, should be stored, I feel,
Where Communists could not break in and steal,
But you are human and condemn the brutes
Who, you suppose, would seize your labor's fruits.
Your labor! Thoughts of your own diligence
Inspire in you such fervid eloquence
That we grow hushed and find our eyes are wet
In tribute to bent back and honest sweat.
Believe me, Robert, I would never say
That teaching school or writing verse is play.
But work! We have it soft. You damn well know it.
If we have ever worked, then I'm a poet
And you're a critic. Go from Breadloaf's ease
Some summer day to Rutland quarry, freeze
Your fingers on the heavy, deafening drill
Five hundred feet below the sun-baked hill.
Your partner shows his check—a dollar-five
Must somehow keep his family alive.
Oh, Cambridge-bored, don't take the "Mauretania"
But tour the steel-owned towns of Pennsylvania
Where discipline's improved on Nazi Prussia,
For steel's a tragedy—but not in Russia.
Go anywhere in this broad land that seems
So happy in your friend DeVoto's dreams:
Watch workers work; I don't suggest you try it;
Taste workers' food; I can't commend the diet;
Know workers' lives. You'll find there's nothing sillier
Than writing odes to poor hard-working Hillyer.

The left wing feels the venom of your tongue.
I can't, alas, deny that some among
Our literati haven't lost their fetters;
They're left-wing, but they're also men of letters,
Full of the foibles writing flesh is heir to.
Employ your shrillest cuss-words if you care to,
To castigate the sundry cliques and claques
Who pay for rolling logs by scratching backs.
The toady and the gangster and the brat,
We have them all. Would you could teach them that
They only smirch the name of communism
Who substitute revenge for criticism.
Enough! They're nought to me, and less to you,
Or should be if you cared to judge us true.
Our best are men who won't accept with pleasure
Their little share of glory and of treasure,
And go alone their smug rejoicing ways.

They hear, in so-called unromantic days,
A trumpet, and with all they have and are
Enlist for the duration of the war.
You will not hear. Well, deafness is your right.
There's no conscription. But there is a fight,
And strange it seems when those who run away
Presume to jeer at other men who stay.
You will not hear. Your practised ears refuse
All but the Pomfret-Cambridge-Breadloaf muse,
A muse experienced but not mature,
Meticulous but not exactly pure,
Through indolence good-natured but not kind,
A little deaf, more than a little blind,
Self-satisfied and yet at times regretful,
Profoundly smug but tending to be fretful.
You will not hear, yet your suspicion's growing
That somewhere there may be a trumpet blowing,
And anger feeds upon the dread surmise
The bugler may be Gabriel in disguise.
To drown him out you try the manly note;
A scared falsetto issues from your throat.
You will not follow, and you can't compete,
So back to fading light and sickish sweet.
In you your muse has found a faithful voice.
Sing, baby, sing. Let Harvard Yard rejoice.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

[1] A Letter to Robert Frost and Others, by Robert Hillyer. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 69 pages. $2.

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Katherine Mansfield: A Reconsideration

The Short Stories of Katherine Mansfield. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.50.

THIS VOLUME contains eighty-eight short stories; "all of Katherine Mansfield's short stories," the jacket states. The first ones were written in 1908 and 1910; the last, presumably, in 1922 in the months preceding her death. These dates are significant because they belong strangely now to an old world, to another time, almost to another century, and these eighty-eight stories are irretrievably a part of that time.

It is first of all essential to isolate the two Katherine Mansfields if one is to come to any honest estimation of her work; it is necessary to set ruthlessly aside that lovely, proud, appealing woman who, with the aid of her best stories, has for a long time been a literary tradition to us. To respond to that figure's austerity, its pride and melancholy, and its heart-breaking loneliness brings one no closer to her talent but rather serves to exclude one utterly from any scrupulous appraisement of the work. This, to an extent, is true of many minor artists, but because of the circumstances of Katherine Mansfield's life and death it seems to me peculiarly true of her. (It is true as well of Rupert Brooke, whose work was enhanced by the appearance of his photograph in the frontispiece of his volume, by a perusal of his gallant letters home. While, contrarily, the work of such a poet as Hart Crane has a vitality eloquently and passionately its own, so independent of the poet's personality and life that one can scarcely reconcile the elements.) In this late day of sterner issues and of a tougher literary appetite, the work of Katherine Mansfield must be considered as complete or incomplete within itself, shorn of the devoted enthusiasm of a Middleton Murry, deprived too of that day-to-day record which she kept and which revealed the sensitive, fastidious, the wholly neurotic and anti-social mind from which these stories came.

The other Katherine Mansfield is here in these six-hundred-odd pages—work, by the effort of the will, detached from the woman one was drawn to because one found facsimile of one's own weaknesses in her journal and from the woman one pitied because one knew her to be ill and lonely and afraid. These pages, delicately, tenderly and carefully composed, are animated by situations so futile that it is difficult to believe they were ever, not of importance but of interest even; stories terminating compactly on infinitesimal disappointments or with ladylike surprises, sketches of county types or foreign types or landscapes not so very different in technique from the sympathetic aquarelles that English ladies on the Continent sit down and do. There are blue skies with soft puffs of cloud in them, quaint houses, shimmering seas in pastel colors, Frenchmen invariably with big mustaches; dolls' tea sets, incredibly cute children, pretty names, such as Pearl Button, pretty places, and not enough, for what the intent must have been, hot love and comprehension for the persecuted young or old, or satire bitter enough for those she would condemn.

It is perhaps unfair to judge a writer's work by what he failed to write rather than by what is there. But had Katherine Mansfield succeeded in doing what she obviously *knew* could and had been done she might have been as enduring as Jane Austen and as invaluable to the history of her time. For there is in these unhappy little stories a thing that makes them different, that saves them oddly from being exactly what they are. It is there on every page, cried out in trembling and desperation, the awful, the speechless confession of her own inadequacy. Not the inadequacy of herself as a human being (although if one did not sternly separate the two it might revert to that in the end), nor her inadequacy as a critic, but the hopeless, the miserable inadequacy to see in any other and wider terms the things she sensed so acutely; the inadequacy to translate into any convincing language the griefs or joys she witnessed or experienced. In line after line, and even in her omissions, one finds those unmistakable signs of panic as time passed and she knew. Even in the closing stories the cognizant despairing voice repeats its teeny-weeny words, restates its irritable and irritating themes, beseeches help, and, through knowing what the best is, knows how cruelly it has failed. Since the middle years of her writing it is evident that Katherine Mansfield saw clearly and recognized the savage confusing wilderness beyond where only the tough and fearless can survive.

In one of her unfinished stories—and with that word one returns, in spite of oneself, to her personal tragedy—she asks: "Why is it so difficult to write simply—and not only simply but *sotto voce,* if you know what I mean?" But even in that day of less violent and less violently disputed issues, Katherine Mansfield herself knew the answer and all that it implied.

KAY BOYLE.

Conversion Novel

Edge of Taos Desert: An Escape to Reality, by Mabel Dodge Luhan. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.

"EDGE OF TAOS DESERT" purports to be the fourth volume of Mrs. Luhan's "Intimate Memories," a work of the telling-all school unique for the heartlessness and humorlessness of its portraits of the author and her friends—a work which D. H. Lawrence called, when he saw it in its early form, "the most heart-destroying revelation of the American life-process that ever has or ever will be produced." He said it made him "sick in [his] solar plexus, like death itself."

This instalment takes Mabel from New York to New Mexico for what she supposed would be a fortnight's visit with Maurice Sterne and her son John Evans in Santa Fé. It leaves her a resident home-owner in Taos with Sterne dismissed and Tony Luhan about to enter her "tepee." In the intervening months (during the War) she had been magically drawn to Taos, where she discovered the Indians' primitive communism—the antithesis of the dividing and atrophying individualism of her entourage. In Taos she fell in love with the landscape, the Indians in general and Tony in particular. Most of the volume is devoted to her ripening love affair and the magical change it wrought in herself.

The first part continues the pattern set in earlier volumes, of rather malicious negativity curiously mingled with the mystical adolescent yearnings of an incomplete and unawakened adult. Then, without warning, she heaves overboard the matter and manner of her previous memoirs and goes reticent with a bang. "For my purpose in this work," she says, "it is not necessary to be unreticent about ourselves."

Why not? Or, if not, why was unreticence so necessary in the earlier books? The question, central to any critical view of her work as a whole, remains unanswered.

"My purpose," it seems, is educational. She wants to tell

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of the "miracle" she experienced in 1918. In Tony she found one who had "the power of Being," and to this mystical power she surrendered. She had "always wanted to have that submissive feeling," and it was "a great satisfaction." She was learning "an old and hackneyed lesson": that *Omnia vincit amor*—the *omnia* in this case being "all the conditioning of the years gone by, and all the crystallizations of heredity and environment." Individualism, she belatedly realized, had gone so far that "everyone seemed queer to all the others and everyone was deeply lonely and negative in loneliness," so that "it was almost the moment for falling into a pattern together" as in an Indian community. "Perhaps we must come to this communal way of life again at a higher level; possibly evolution proceeds spirally, repeating itself. Maybe. How does one know?"

Perhaps maybe one reads Engels. However, her primary interest is not speculative. It is the miracle occurring in herself that she feels she must communicate to the world. She has a "deep conviction" that she and Tony were "brought together for this purpose, and my reason for living is to show how life may be, must be, lived."

And how may comma must comma life be lived? Apparently you must have a large income and find an Indian with the power of Being and get that submissive feeling.

It's all but too miraculous, and Mrs. Luhan is intensely serious and sincere about it. She keeps insisting that she has been converted away from the old destructive separatism to the new wholeness of reality, but she doesn't show it to you in concrete terms because reticence is the thing now—and then suddenly you remember her ludicrous "Lorenzo in Taos" and how then, years *after* this alleged conversion, she exhibited the old destructive sickness in aggravated form with no remotest sign of any new wholeness or "sense of reality"—and you shrug and decide that well, anyway, this is a fairly talented and convincing work of fiction.

PHILIP STEVENSON.

John Jay Chapman

John Jay Chapman and His Letters, edited by M. A. DeWolfe Howe. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 500 pages. $4.

"JACK CHAPMAN, you talk like an angel," said William James, laying both hands on his shoulders—having followed him to his room at the end of an evening in the house in which they were both guests. If one can talk like an angel and a naughty boy at the same time, that was exactly true. Chapman's genius for conversation and correspondence was a peculiar one. Indeed he discovered a new tone and working basis for human intercourse. It lay in combining an unsparing and startling frankness with a perfect and charming good humor. His instinctive touch turned the former often into a humorous hyperbole of frankness which relaxed tautness all round. It was not always hyperbole. If he purported to smash your convictions with his genial sledge-hammer you knew that the owner of that face, though it might be quite grave and though he might mean what he said, could not intend any assault on your inner citadel. "Why not have all conversation on this basis," he seemed to say; "if we were all accustomed to it and took it for granted it would be far more interesting. It would be our common fealty to truth." It came of his passion for the genuine. He was a moral prophet, a spoiled youth, and a born artist, with the most imperious esthetic necessities at the core of his being—these three rolled into one.

The spoiling had begun in childhood and continued in great measure through life. That is, he was taken by many friends indulgently; they shared one half of his mood and not the other; reflected the good humor but were not prompted to return the blows. He seldom got as good as he gave in the matter of criticism. It is a pity they did not learn the trick from him. But the spoiling had produced a rare wine. Hear him on the then professor of Fine Arts, Charles Eliot Norton. "A blind man with the religion of pictures, a deaf man worshiping music, a man without sensuous intuition erecting altars to the esthetic." Yet later he published a beautifully appreciative account of Norton's good influence and nature. Hear him on what he deems the bad effect of money-seeking at Harvard.

> Now then, at the dedication of the new Medical School [President] Eliot goes about in a cab with Pierpont [Morgan the elder], hangs laurel wreaths on his nose, and gives him his papal kiss. Now what I want to know is this—what has Eliot got to say to the young man entering business who is about to be corrupted by Morgan and his class? How eloquently can Eliot present the case for honesty? Can he say anything that will reverberate through the chambers of that young man's brain more loudly than that kiss?

Again, on Mr. Bernard Shaw: "He is a sort of albino with certain corpuscles left out of his composition." Or after a long talk with Colonel House: "He moves like a spirit between all the elements and all the machinery—he occupies no space and has no dimensions. . . . He's an underground character. Put him in the sun and he blinks. But he sees in the dark." Or on Boston—which he loves: "Poor old Boston—a dried nut—with a faint pulse—just throbbing, and eyes all but closed—thinks it is alive—mumbles—smiles with complacent senescent vacuity."

Chapman's devotion to truth was a peculiar thing too. It said to him: "Speak out your inspirations. Don't shamefacedly conceal and dishonor them. They will not grow if you do. There is a truth in them. They need a hearing in our day. None of our remarks are finally true. Final truth is with God. [Chapman was deeply religious and mystical.] But speak them out in their clear outline, without obscuring and delaying qualification. Bring them out for Heaven's sake into the light and air. That way lies health for all. They push in a good direction." His impudences about psychology, etc., in letters to William James meant simply what he says at the end of his "Dante":

> We have been endeavoring to express the fluid universe of man's emotions in terms and symbols drawn from the study of physical science, and in the meantime we have all but forgotten the language of Art, Poetry and Religion, which alone can express the passion for truth with which we burn.

This biography, itself admirably written and constructed, has contrived the rare achievement of portraying the man's whole character. He steps out of the canvas and we can walk round him. This it does not only by the descriptive touches and interpretation but by the sagacity of the selection from the enormous mass of letters; also by an exceptional research unearthing details that supply certain explanations long needed. The incident (so long a respected mystery) during Chapman's first courtship, of his thrusting his arm into the fire and holding it there so that it had to be amputated, is now told in his own words. The negotiations with Theodore Roosevelt about the governership in 1898, which led to a twenty-years' breach between them, are at length published.

DICKINSON S. MILLER.

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A Check List of Fall Books

BIOGRAPHY, MEMOIRS AND LETTERS

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE: THE MAN IN HIS TIME, by John Bakeless (Morrow, $3.50). Based partly on material recently discovered.

AN ARTIST IN AMERICA, by Thomas H. Benton (McBride, $3.50). The autobiography of a famous mural painter.

THE LIFE OF PAUL GAUGUIN, by Robert Burnett (Oxford, $3.50). Showing that the truth about Gauguin was different from but almost stranger than the legend.

BRISBANE: A CANDID BIOGRAPHY, by Oliver Carlson (Stackpole, $3). By a co-author of "Hearst: Lord of San Simeon." (Oct. 25.)

LIFE IS MY SONG, by John Gould Fletcher (Farrar and Rinehart, $3.50). The story of an American poet in Boston, London and the Southwest. (Oct. 18.)

THE LETTERS OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLY, edited by George Stuart Gordon (Holt, $5). A complete job of restoration on the Shelley correspondence.

THE HARP THAT ONCE... by Howard Mumford Jones (Holt, $3.50). Tom Moore and literary life under the Regency.

ASSIGNMENT IN UTOPIA, by Eugene Lyons (Harcourt, Brace, $3.50). A foreign correspondent's autobiography, with emphasis on his grievances against the Russian government.

JEFFERSON DAVIS, by Robert McElroy (Harpers, 2 vols., $8). The first exhaustive biography. (Oct. 20.)

THE MEMOIRS OF HARRIET MONROE. (Macmillan, $3.50). The life of a poet and editor who knew everybody and helped everybody. (Oct. 26.)

GOYA, by Charles G. Poore (Scribner's, $3.75). A full-length biographical study, profusely illustrated.

JAMES BOSWELL AND THE GIRL FROM BOTANY BAY, by Frederick A. Pottle (Viking, $7.50). Boswell as the benefactor of an escaped convict; from records newly discovered.

HEINRICH HEINE: PARADOX AND POET, by Louis Untermeyer (Harcourt, Brace, 2 vols., $6). A sympathetic critical biography. (Oct. 28.)

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (Macmillan, $3). All his fine autobiographical writings in one volume. (Oct. 19.)

FICTION

EUROPA IN LIMBO, by Robert Briffault (Scribner's, $2.75). A sequel to "Europa," carrying its hero through the War and the Russian revolution; written in anger.

THE RAINS CAME, by Louis Bromfield (Harpers, $2.50). A group of Anglo-Indians, in drought and deluge. (Oct. 20.)

WAR WITH THE NEWTS, by Karel Capek (Putnam, $2.50). A satirical fantasy of the next war.

THE TURNING WHEELS, by Stuart Cloete (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50). The great trek of the Boers, magnificently told. (Nov. 1.)

THE GARDEN OF ADONIS, by Caroline Gordon (Scribner's, $2.50). Planters and Poor Whites in the modern South.

THE ENEMY GODS, by Oliver LaFarge (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50). About the Navajos of today and their relation to the white conquerors.

YOUNG HENRY OF NAVARRE, by Heinrich Mann (Knopf, $3). A long historical novel, one of Heinrich Mann's best.

SO GREAT A MAN, by David Pilgrim (Harpers, $3). A romantic novel about Napoleon and Marie Walewska.

COUNTER-ATTACK IN SPAIN, by Ramon Sender (Houghton Mifflin, $3). Life in the trenches; so far the only Spanish war novel written by an actual combatant. (Nov. 1.)

PITY THE TYRANT, by Hans Otto Storm (Longmans, Green, $2). An American engineer gets himself modestly entangled in Peruvian quarrels.

THE FAITHFUL WIFE, by Sigrid Undset (Knopf, $2.50). About divorce as it works out in Scandinavia.

ART, VERSE AND CRITICISM

ARCHITECTURE AND MODERN LIFE, by Baker Brownell and Frank Lloyd Wright (Harpers, $4). An account of American building, present and future. (Oct. 20.)

THE STORY OF LOWRY MAEN, by Padraic Colum (Macmillan, $2). A narrative poem of early Ireland, written in the heroic vein. (Oct. 19.)

ISLAND OF BALI, by Miguel Covarrubias (Knopf, $5). The past and probable future of Bali, with photographs by Rose Covarrubias and many drawings by the author. (Nov. 5.)

SUCH COUNSELS YOU GAVE TO ME, by Robinson Jeffers (Random House, $2.50). His first new book of poems in two years.

THE MAN WITH THE BLUE GUITAR, by Wallace Stevens (Knopf, $2). The new work of a fine but neglected poet.

THE ARTS, by Hendrik Willem Van Loon (Simon and Schuster, $3.95). A round-up of all the arts of all the ages.

COLD MORNING SKY, by Marya Zaturenska (Macmillan, $1.75). The second book of a talented poet.

GENERAL

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CIO: INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM IN AMERICA, by J. Raymond Walsh (Norton, $2.50). The history, aims and leadership of the struggle for vertical unions. (Oct 27.)

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Death Over Ireland

Famine, by Liam O'Flaherty. New York: Random House. $2.50.

THIS MOST recent of Liam O'Flaherty's novels is one of his best. It is a simple and direct story of the famine that swept Ireland in 1845, beginning as a blight on the potato crop that provided the main source of food for the peasants, and ending with a plague, an uprising and the great mass emigration to America. In the rocky, secluded Black Valley with which the book deals the famine left the dwellers in its thirty-seven cottages dead or in jail or in exile, and the continuity of life was broken as the continuity of life in Ireland itself was all but broken in those years. The episodes in the book are melodramatic and sometimes lurid—it tells of people who are driven insane by hunger and fear, of a mother killing her children and watching them with pride because they have at last stopped crying, of old people abandoned and a ruling class sinking into greater degradation as the misery of its subjects increases—but in spite of all this its prose is so even and controlled and so free of hysteria that you do not lose sight of the greater social tragedy it presents because of the unqualified horror of its isolated moments. O'Flaherty's first novel, "The Return of the Brute," described the end of a squad of soldiers on the Western Front; as they went down, one after another, you came to see them as increasingly savage, their arms growing longer, their expressions more brutal, the shell-pitted land through which they crawled sinking back to a prehistoric jungle. "Famine" has something of that same quality of gradual dissolution, in which no grim episode particularly stands out, except that in it an entire society is shown at the point of death.

But "Famine" is a better book than "The Return of the Brute" and not only because O'Flaherty is now a more accomplished novelist. The story centers around the fate of the peasant Kilmartin family—old Brian Kilmartin and his wife are left to die in the Valley, one son is involved in the murder of the landlord and becomes a revolutionist, Mary Kilmartin and her son and husband escape to America (this last, incidentally, is the least convincing episode in the book, since the escape is engineered by revolutionists who emerge almost as mysterious to the reader as they were to their English enemies)—and while these characterizations are good, they are not new in the sense that other figures in the novel are. We seem to have met these same peasants, just as superstitious, emotional, proud and yet subservient, poetic, half-pagan and accustomed to squalor, in any number of Irish novels. In his picture of a group of village intellectuals who are played off against them, O'Flaherty has created more memorable and more complex figures: a priest who alternately leads the people to take action and holds them back, until he succeeds only in confusing them; a young doctor who recoils in horror from their misery, plunges into dissipation with the English, and comes back through the combined influence of the priest and his disgust with his ruling-class companions. "You can't change the blood in your veins," the priest tells him. "It will cry out in the darkness of the night against your foolishness. . . . The people are always right in the mass." Like the peasants themselves, these minor figures go down in the general ruin, increasingly unstable and more bitterly tormented as they become aware of their ineffectuality. They give "Famine" a significance to the contemporary world that O'Flaherty's earlier novels have lacked. And while they are in a way also familiar figures in Irish fiction, with Stephen Dedalus

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perhaps belonging among them, their weakness is made intelligible in "Famine" because it is seen in perspective against the plight of the common people, and because of that their instability is traced to its source.

ROBERT CANTWELL.

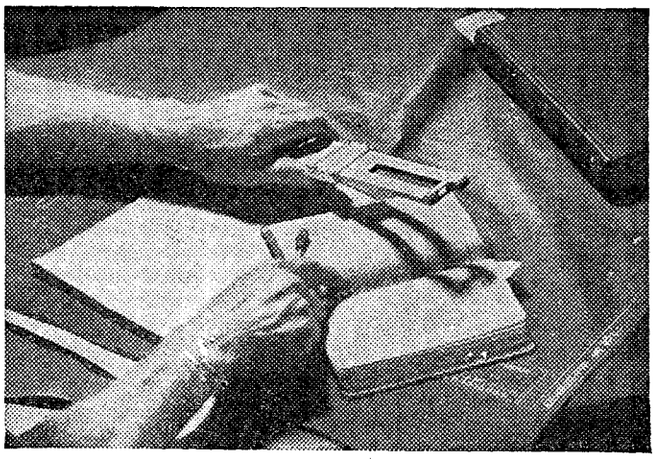
Reactionary Poems

Selected Poems, by Allen Tate. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 112 pages. $2.

THE FORTY-FIVE poems that Allen Tate has here selected from his three earlier books emphasize again the two conditions that give his work its distinction and forestall a critic's arguments. The intelligence behind them is itself critical: no idea or impulse is left untested by the most autocratic scruple of thought and conscience. And their method is experimental: Tate anticipates the reader's difficulty by declaring first his own. He has followed Valéry's doctrine of perfectibility by subjecting his work to frequent and severe revision, in almost all cases arriving at firmer qualities of style, cadence and structure. For any doubts that may rise about such treatment of the experience in which a poem originates, Tate has his answer: "As a poet, I have never had any experience. . . . My concern is the experience that I hope the reader will have in reading the poem."

In one division of his work this statement will be hard to credit, and may even be accused of esthetic casuistry. It is the part that includes his finest work: poems like "The Cross," "The Wolves," "Mother and Son," "The Subway" and "The Mediterranean," which are also among the finest American poems of our time and will probably never require revision. To these the reader's response would not be so complete if their author had not written under the impact of a personal or imaginative experience so strong that it immediately gave him his necessary style and symbols. In them his ordeal finds its most passionate language; they bring tradition to that focus of conscience where alone it can take on life and allow the modern sensibility to come to terms with its religious, moral and social inheritance. If these forces count for anything in the American spiritual order, it is defined here, and the result is a poetry by turns serene and savagely intense, written in a style that shows a superb economy and richness of means.

There is, however, another side of Tate's work that offers a more complex problem and shows less convincing results. He raises, as he himself has recently said of a fellow-poet, "the fundamental problems of his art"; "as a critic [he] is a master of ideas, but as a poet he is occasionally mastered by them"; and sometimes "the idea is not available to [him] on the level of poetry." This is apparent in satirical poems like "Causerie," "Horatian Epode" and "Retroduction to American History," where the plight of the ironic mind in a distracted age is described, and it reappears in historical speculations like "Sonnets of the Blood" and "Message from Abroad" and allegories like "Last Days of Alice." Here, in varying degrees, dramatic immediacy gives way to abstraction; the critical attitude has trouble in coming to grips with poetic sincerity; the bristling derivations are not subdued to the symbolism which is the distinction of "The Cross" and "Idiot" or to the pathos that ennobles "To the Lacedæmonians" and "The Meaning of Life." Tate's rhetoric—a quality his best work has restored to honor in American verse—here becomes too heavily contrived from wit and theory. But these poems show what he has made of the conflict between tradition and skepticism, and thus



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MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL.

The Devil You Say

Lucifer at Large, by C. John McCole. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 344 pages. $3.

THIS IS a study of the modern novel, with the thesis that the work of the devil is traceable in the novelists' selection of material and treatment these last few years. English 41a, but for the advanced student. Emphasis is placed on readings from the actual works, including those of Saroyan and Dreiser, and the source material is that of literary life in the raw: The New York Times Book Review, Benjamin de Casseres quoted on the jacket of "Cawdor," The Saturday Review of Literature, William Troy, Amy Loveman. The air of author-reverence proceeds as the square of the number of semesters that courses on the Complete Works have been given (M., W., F.; 6 pts.); still the book sounds like a more-than-ordinarily promising instructor's wild oat, for in the case of several writers he is pretty much on his own, with no established sources at all and everything to be dug out of the books themselves and integrated with such current literary gossip as "The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas," comments in The Bookman, etc.

There is much to show that Mr. McCole reads around with pleasure and perception and more to show he reads a great deal; and after he has got through establishing that he has mastered the plot of each of an author's books, he compares, alludes, glosses with the best of them and gets on with his thesis. Although the novel has been through a pretty tough and demon-ridden time, the enduring truths will out and with our return to the fiction of "men and women as *human* beings" we are on our way into the clear—as witness the interest in "Gone with the Wind" and Mr. James Hilton. Mr. McCole has stern words for the abnormal in any writing not yet canonized. I don't know just how I come to be thinking of the intelligent clean-living frosh the Gamma Mu boys would single out each year, with some horrible divination for just the type it would warp and blast for life, to coax unsuspectingly down to the red-light end of South Street, lock him in one of the upstairs rooms, and run off with his pants.

OTIS FERGUSON.

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Hyde Park, Tennessee Style

Andrew Jackson: Portrait of a President, by Marquis James. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 627 pages. $5.

WHEN Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, the man who was destined to translate its equalitarian theory into political actualities was a boy of nine in a remote settlement of the Carolinas. Andrew Jackson grew to manhood without the education or the social graces of the aristocrats from Virginia and Massachusetts who filled the presidency in august and unbroken succession until his election in 1828. The muddy boots and homespun clothes that crowded the White House on March 4, 1829, have impressed themselves on the popular imagination as have few scenes in our history. The man, the day and the reception mark an era. The common people had seized the scepter. Power, in future, was to be had only by placating, flattering or fooling them. The aristocrats, who denounced extension of the suffrage in the twenties and the thirties as contrary to the Constitution, hardly considering it necessary to hide their low opinion of the masses, did indeed come back to power in 1840. But they did so by picking a candidate who was born in a log cabin and by accusing Martin Van Buren, Jackson's successor, of putting cologne on his whiskers.

There are many similarities between the Jacksonian period and our own. One of them is that Jackson was as little fitted by his class position to be the leader and the symbol of the struggle for political democracy as Franklin D. Roosevelt was to be the leader and symbol of the present movement toward social democracy. Between the well-to-do Tennessee lawyer-planter at the spacious Hermitage and the debtor on the frontier, there was as little resemblance as there is between the broad-acred lawyer-squire of Hyde Park and the miner in a Pennsylvania company town. Jackson, as Mr. James shows, was a member of the nabob wing of the Republican Party in Tennessee, as opposed to the "leather shirts." He did not approve of the debtor legislation by which Kentucky sought to alleviate the misery created by the panic of 1819. For all his fame as the Hero of New Orleans, General Jackson found his protest against similar enactments by the Tennessee Legislature rejected as "disrespectful."

"Nearly every instinct and interest of Andrew Jackson's long life," Mr. James writes, "set him in opposition to this undisciplined rising of the masses." The future champion of popular rights against judicial oligarchy was a former judge, a sound-money man and a creditor. In 1822, two years before he became the common man's candidate against Adams, General Jackson was disturbed by the attempt of the Kentucky Legislature to enforce its will on Kentucky's Supreme Court in the interests of the poorer classes. "The conduct of Kentucky," he wrote to a favorite nephew in 1822, ". . . augurs the destruction of our republican government—for let me tell you that all the rights secured to the citizens under the Constitution are worth nothing . . . except guaranteed to them by a virtuous and independent judiciary."

A clique of politicians harnessed popular aspiration and made Jackson President; popular aspiration, in its turn, harnessed Jackson and made him great. The common man would have won political equality without Jackson; Jackson, for all his fine personal qualities and military exploits, would not have achieved greatness without the stirring of the masses that be[gan] in the panic of 1819. Here again there is a parallel [to] our own times. Jack-

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son's views were as nebulous, his platform as vague as Mr. Roosevelt's. The striving for democracy found embodiment in certain abstract principles; but principles alone generate too little warmth. A personality was required as their symbol. The time lifted Jackson up, as it did Roosevelt. His contributions, like Roosevelt's, were political deftness, a vein of idealism, an emotional readiness to be carried away by the democratic rising, and capacity for leadership. This last, too, was the product of the moment as well as the man.

The biography written by Mr. James lacks an understanding of social forces. History and biography are forms of politics; but his blood seems untouched by the Jacksonian movement. He tells Jackson's story with simplicity and honesty. He has gone to the sources; he has not let his imagination serve as substitute for fact. The man, the devoted husband, the self-willed politician, the doting grandpa, the natural gentleman and the fierce warrior, move and breathe when Mr. James is finished. But the man is the lesser part of Jackson; attractive, but not very important. To present him apart from the social drama that made him great is to picture him in a vacuum, to leave him unexplained. Mr. James does no more than occasionally touch upon the springs whence flowed his power. So hostile and unsympathetic a biographer as William Graham Sumner showed far more insight into the class conflict that gave birth to Jacksonian Democracy. Mr. James has made a spirited and conscientious contribution to our knowledge of Jackson, the man. But the man is inseparable from the time, and the complete story, from the vantage point of our own struggle to extend democracy, has yet to be written. I. F. STONE.

Woman of the Soil

Katrina, by Sally Salminen. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

THIS STORY of the Aland Islands is recommended for its straightforward and effective writing; it is one of those books that give the impression—usually quite wrongly—of having been written without the slightest effort. In addition it passes very subtly from one aspect of living to another, from a group study to a study of marriage and maternity, without losing any of its breadth and power in transit.

When Katrina marries her likable and useless husband and goes to live in a village of cabins whose inhabitants are farmed out to the landowners at skim-milk-and-potato wages, she becomes both the chief character and a mirror in which we see the lives of her neighbors. Her husband's regular departure on a ship at the beginning of every summer, her toil in the landowners' fields and kitchens to hold her cabin until he returns, and the birth of another child whenever he does so—these events are common to them all and are seen as such by Katrina, who fights not only for herself but for her people. Until, almost imperceptibly, the author begins to stress the personal note; gradually the significance of the village recedes as the years pass, and the children and husband advance into the forefront of the woman's mind and so into first place in the book. With the inevitable climax—that the more her fight for the security of her family succeeds, the more her children succeed in breaking away from the poverty of the village and establishing themselves in richer lands.

Like most studies of marriage and maternity the keynote here is a strongly emotional one: where the book differs, however, is in the fact that the sentiment is never swilled out like warm soup, and in the absence of black villains and white-as-snow heroines. Miss Salminen knows how to extract essence from normal characters and it is this that makes her many figures think, speak and act with absolute genuineness. RICHARD VAUGHAN.

Nothing Ventured

New Writing, edited by John Lehmann. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 267 pages. $2.75.

New Letters in America, edited by Horace Gregory. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 222 pages. $2.

THE YOUNGER writers of the English-speaking world, if they are truly represented by these two collections of their work, are cultivating qualities which the young are not commonly supposed to manifest. The strongest impression left by this writing is of sobriety, concision, extreme carefulness. Many of the sketches—they are so matter-of-fact that it is impossible to tell fact from fiction—have the traits of plain, competent reporting; they are painstakingly honest and unpretentious. The authors never raise their voices above a uniform quiet. They seem to say: "Whatever happens, we must exercise restraint and discipline, and since we are writing prose, let's be as prosaic as possible."

Most of these qualities are indubitable virtues in literature; yet the reader is left wondering whether prose need be quite so unexcited, and whether there is much use in control unless something is there to be controlled. To be sure, the less you try to do, the surer you are not to fail; mastery can be achieved by the exclusion of difficulties; and no doubt energy, if it intruded its demands, would make trouble. But the faultlessness so arrived at is likely to be the impeccability of a still-born child.

In "New Writing," the English volume, James Stern writes of his visit to mines and miners; Christopher Isherwood describes the Germans an English tutor encountered in Berlin; Ben Field tells how a farmer failed to sell his corn. In the American volume, Eleanor Clark writes of the experiences of some pacifists in jail and in court; John Hampson describes the day of a boy who washes dishes in a hotel; Eugene Joffe tells how a superannuated trumpeter failed to get a job in a jazz orchestra. These pieces are all well written in their way—by and large the best the books have to offer. Yet none of them arouses a stronger sentiment than mild pathos. The stories themselves are not inherently trivial instances, but the sedulous underwriting of the authors reduces them all to such triviality that they barely rise above the threshold of consciousness. In their zeal to avoid the common faults of overwriting, the writers have bled away all their force, if they ever had any.

One notable exception may be mentioned: Bob Brown's "The Bloody Beer Bottle" in "New Writing." It may not have perfect finish of style, but it has humor and humanity and strength; it's all alive. Among other things, it sounds as if its author had lived with and belonged to the men he writes of, not as if he had merely regarded them with pity while they labored. Its vigor is in sharp contrast with the prevailing anemia.

Such stories and sketches, however, are not all these volumes contain. Both of them include several experimental undertakings. In Elizabeth Bishop's "The Sea and Its Shore," the play of fancy about an old man who picks up papers on a public beach [illegible] usual and pleasant. I. J. Kapstein's "The Man in the [illegible] Is Not Jesus," a picture of

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religious delusion, is not without force, though somewhat on the strident side. But most of the experiments tend to be decidedly frenetic, even to the point of unreadability.

All the poems in the American collection belong to the experimental school. The most ambitious of them and the most impressive is Muriel Rukeyser's allegory, "The Cruise," but even it suffers from the strange disease which afflicts them all—an epilepsy that twists their features and leaves them frozen in contorted attitudes. Poetry, however, has been tortured for so long that such gymnastics have little novelty. More surprising is the similar lack of novelty in mood. These poets, though they are not following Mr. Eliot's trail, are still in the waste land: "the world bleached in the gape of space," "northern patricidal salt-ice loneliness," "a cold and skeletal route To wisdom's grim seaside," "in the weed-topped skull The protean lenses turned to slime." Here are the same old preoccupations with death and bones and decay—nothing new or revolutionary like a concern with the living.

These two semi-annual collections of new writing raise the question whether there is any need of semi-annual collections of new writing. They continue a tradition which began with The Little Review, of presenting work which makes no compromise with the public taste, but this tradition seems to have grown progressively more sterile. Twenty-five years ago the writing which had the most vitality could not have been published elsewhere; now it is the "advanced" writing that is lifeless. As I was reading these books, Browning's line kept running through my mind: "Penury, inertness and grimace, In some strange sort, were the land's portion." And so they are—if the youth of England and America is here truly represented. But I doubt whether it is.

T. K. WHIPPLE.

Papal Bulls

Pope Pius XI and World Affairs, by William Teeling. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. 319 pages. $2.50.

AS A CATHOLIC in good standing, the nephew of a Papal Privy Chamberlain and the cousin of a Noble Guard, Mr. Teeling offers a criticism of the foreign policy of the Vatican under Pope Pius XI that warrants attention beyond the casual. He makes it clear at the outset—and in many other passages—that he in no way questions the spiritual authority of His Holiness or Church dogma. The Catholic world, comprising 350,000,000 souls and many nations, classes and colors, is a complex matter in itself, let alone other contemporary world problems. To deal with it requires not only the best informed chancellery in existence, but a man of wide vision, tact and understanding. And it is just this vision, tact and understanding that he fails to find in the Vatican today. Conduct of world affairs for a universal church he finds sadly limited, and to him there is no question that it is Pius XI who is determining the conduct: "Luckily the present Pope is a man of sufficient character and sufficiently autocratic in his actions to make it certain that what the Vatican does can be taken to be his own personal policy."—"In the long run, it is not going to hurt the Catholic Church what side the Vatican takes up politically; it has never done so in the past. But it will greatly hurt the world, and all those who try to guide it, if they do not follow closely the political developments of the Vatican and the more mundane influences of the Catholic Church in the post-war world."

Passages dealing with life in the Vatican—Papal elections, diplomatic differences, the coronation—are dramatic

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and colorful background for the serious analysis, country by country, of problems, negotiations, policy and results. The situation, as Mr. Teeling sees it, is this: the liberation of the Papacy, under Mussolini, entailed the reëstablishment of the Papal states, plus a cash settlement—and Italian state bonds. The sum of Italian bonds—with an agreement that they shall not be redeemed for a certain number of years—plus a Pontiff extremely patriotic by nature, is a world church with an Italian outlook, today a totalitarian outlook. Mr. Teeling questions whether the Church in the United States—the source of most present contributions to the Vatican—and the Church in England will go on indefinitely accepting autocratic, old-world leadership while they pay the bills. Although the Pope's pronouncements before the Ethiopian war angered Italians more than non-residents find credible, the democratic countries waited for more vigorous denunciation, or open action. Unreproved by the Pope, heavy collections from the poor have alienated even Irish Catholics in England. The book contains much more; it is packed with detailed criticism in many matters—the friendly criticism of a loyal son of the Church—but definite and open.

B. E. BETTINGER.

Books in Brief

Labby, by Hesketh Pearson. New York: Harper and Brothers. 318 pages. $3.50.

TO HIS own generation Henry Labouchere represented the sporting aspect of English politics which appears in the political novels of Disraeli and Trollope. Of him it was said, as Lady Oxford said of young Arthur Balfour: "Politics attract him as a game which he thinks he plays well, and which amuses him as a game of chess might do." By virtue of circumstances he sat at the opposite side of the board from Balfour, and played the radical red against the Tory white. In his war against tradition and privilege, the most venerable and absurd survival of all was his favorite target for satire and ridicule—the Royal Family and household. Sitting in Parliament for Northampton, he was yoked with that eminent unbeliever Charles Bradlaugh, to whose strenuous atheism his own indifference afforded a pleasant contrast. His cynicism never struck a happier note than when he insisted on describing himself as "the Christian Member" for Northampton. Yet, behind the mask of *je m'en fichisme,* Labouchere concealed genuine convictions. He used all his skill to effect a combination in favor of the radical program. Gladstone, Parnell and Chamberlain were necessary to such a combination, and the Home Rule question divided them beyond hope. Chamberlain, Labouchere always regarded as an arch traitor, false to his early faith; and a personal animosity spiced his attacks, in Parliament and in Truth, upon the political and financial dishonesty which characterized the sordid imperialism of English colonial policy under Chamberlain. Mr. Pearson's book is an example of derivative biography, based on Mr. Algar Thoreld's authorized life of Labouchere, "styled" to meet the demand of the present day for ease, liveliness and color. He has collected innumerable anecdotes of Labby's wit and acumen, and has painted a credible portrait.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Roosevelt to Roosevelt: The United States in the Twentieth Century, by Dwight Lowell Dumond. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 596 pages. $3.50.

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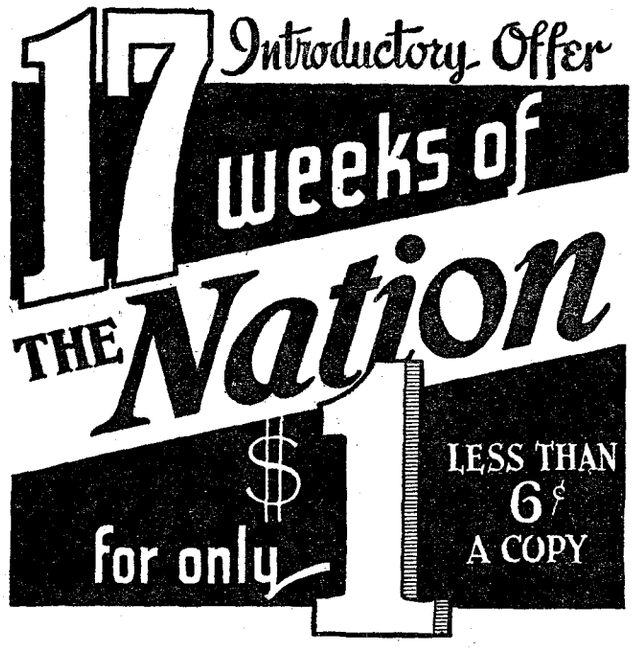

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The Anointed, by Clyde Brion Davis. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

The sailor hero of Mr. Davis' novel suffers from an irrepressible curiosity about the nature of reality and the meaning of things. He wants to know why smoke spirals from left to right in one part of the world and from right to left in another. He asks the why and what for of the universe and stars, a little like a precocious child, and like a child he escapes banality; his reactions have genuine charm, humor and strangeness. There is a Mother Goose-like combination of naïveté and shrewdness to the book, a simplicity of style, an acuteness of characterization and observation. Structure seems to be the author's weak point. The form is sometimes too episodic and anecdotal and such a scene as the one in which a consumptive hobo is murdered by a cardsharp loses the full violence of its effect through a deliberate kind of plot underdevelopment. Even so there is more to like than to find fault with in "The Anointed." It is nice to be able to say that Mr. Davis is a new talent, that his book is a selection of the Discoverers group, and that this time they have picked a plum. C. L.

We Are Ten, by Fannie Hurst. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

The stories in Miss Hurst's latest collection are all of a kind. They hinge too frequently on an ill advised match, in which the red-headed wife is either eight years older or eight inches taller than her husband; the marriage skids along precariously for a period ranging from six months to five years before one of the couple begins to go off on too many binges while the other sits and broods; brooding gives way to action which is likely to leave somebody dying under circumstances a bit too pat. The trick endings, unlike O'Henry's, can generally be sighted around the first third of the story, heave into clear view around the second third, and turn up at the finish with a disappointing thud. Miss Hurst writes with her usual fondness for exaggeration, her love of repetition and her almost complete disregard of syntax. Her preoccupation throughout is for what she calls "the turgid and dangerous currents beneath the daily surface of life." These currents run true enough to actuality to account for her vast short-story audience. But they run no closer. M. B.

Academic Procession, by James Reid Parker. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

Faculty life in a third-rate college comes in for deadly portrayal in these chapters, most of which first appeared in The New Yorker. The professors keep in academic trim by working themselves into frenzies over the complexities of local dining-out and by skidding through maneuvers in Faculty Club politics, all of which activity is dominated by laws governing the manifold gradations of ranks and ages. In a dry, dead-pan manner, the author describes his pedagogues crowing over requests to act as chaperons at student dances, groveling amiably before a trustee when

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they'd rather kick his teeth in and getting their mental uplift from the intricacies of the professorial caste system. There is, of course, the obvious danger in such a series that the professors may seem a bit anemic to be carrying the weight of an entire book. But Mr. Parker has created from them a facsimile of the mediocre which might serve to ventilate many aspects of even a first-rate college.

M. B.

CONTRIBUTORS

RALPH BATES is an English author who has written two novels dealing with the revolutionary movement in Spain, "The Olive Field" and "Lean Men." A third novel, "Rainbow Fish" was published last spring.

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JAMES DALY, who has worked in steel mills, taught school, directed and acted in the theatre and done ghost writing, is the author of two books of verse, "The Guilty Sun" and "One Season Shattered."

CARLTON BROWN has contributed short stories to The New Yorker, Esquire and other magazines. He has just completed a book on correspondence clubs which Modern Age Books will publish this winter.

LEWIS MUMFORD has just finished the manuscript of "The Culture of Cities," which will be published early in 1938 by Harcourt, Brace and Company.

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GRANVILLE HICKS, author of "The Great Tradition" and "John Reed," is now working on a book on English literature during the last half-century.

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PHILIP STEVENSON, author and playwright, last winter was awarded the New Theatre League Prize for a one-act play, "What It Takes." A new play of his, "Transit," appears in the October issue of The One-Act Play Magazine.

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The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of George Libaire, Christopher Lazare and Miriam Borgenicht.

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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, and March 3, 1933, of The New Republic, published weekly at New York, N. Y. for October 1st, 1937.

STATE OF NEW YORK } ss.
COUNTY OF NEW YORK }

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Daniel Mebane, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of The New Republic and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption required by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager, are:

Publisher, Editorial Publications, Inc., 40 E. 49th St., New York, N. Y.

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Managing Editor, Bruce Bliven, 40 E. 49th St., New York, N. Y.

Business Manager, Daniel Mebane, 40 E. 49th St., New York, N. Y.

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DANIEL MEBANE,
Signature of Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 27th day of September, 1937.

MARIAN T. KEENAN, Notary Public.

My commission expires March 30, 1939.

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